HARSHA AND HIS TIMES

Dr. B. N. SRIVASTAVA

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A Glimpse of Political History
During the Seventh Century A. D.

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In Sweet Remembrance
of
My Revered Father
Sri Bhagwati Nath Srivastava
Bar-at-Law
(1900–1942)

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PREFACE

The present work is substantially based on my thesis approved by the Lucknow University for the Degree of Ph. D. in 1961. Its original title, 'Northern India During the Seventh Century—A Glimpse of Political History,' has been changed into the present one for a number of reasons; but it will be noticed that this modification does not in any way affect my treatment of the political history of that period. The century marks the ascendancy of the House of Pushpabhūtis in which, after overcoming a series of political crises, Harsha succeeded in building up an extensive empire over the ruins of the vast dominions of Yaśodharman and raised Kannauj to the status of the most important metropolis of India. His departure from the political arena–without a successor–released the forces of disintegration and hastened the dissolution of his empire. And in the subsequent mushroom growth of the numerous dynasties all over Northern India, the rhythm of Indian history was, as usual, repeated. The present disquisition has taken note of all these factors.

In pursuing my studies of the aforesaid period, I have taken into consideration not only the archaeological evidence available so far, but also the literary evidence of a contemporary character. It has been my endeavour to assess the real hlstorical value of the available data, examine them critically and present them in their real perspective. In doing so, I have never allowed myself to be drifted by panegyric statements, whatever be their literary worth. My honest opinion is that no historian should be guided by bards, panegyrists, court-poets or chroniclers, but rather try to derive the germs of truth from their writings. Although there are not many works to shed light on the period under review, yet there is absolutely no dearth of epigraphic material suitable for our purpose. In the course of my study, it was noticed that certain observations of much historical importance, whether in literary accounts or in epigraphs, and hitherto deemed uncorroborated, have received striking confirmations when the entire evidence is collected and collated. Fortunately for us, there is the account of two eye-witnesses of foreign nationality throwing welcome light on many facts about the political and cultural history of the period, much similar to that of the days of Chandragupta Maurya. It goes without saying that the history of Harsha and that of his contemporaries has been considerably enriched through the writings of foreigners like Hsuan Chuang and Wang-hiuen-tse who came to this country and moved about to form a clear idea of the times. Their descriptions and estimates of men and manners of this land are undoubtedly graphic and the veracity of their accounts can hardly be questioned. While it is true that we would have been more fortunate in respect of our purpose if further similar material had come to light, yet what already exists is by no means insignificant for the same. Indeed, whatever we know about the history of Chandragupta Maurya or Harsha through literary and other sources cannot be matched with that of other crowned heads of this country in the pre-Muslim period. It goes without saying that hundreds of rulers of India are mere non-descripts in its political history. I may be charged with treading a beaten track, for the life and times of Harsha have formed the theme of the works of several eminent scholars in the past. On my part, it will be seen that effort has been made to assess all evidentiary data at their real worth and not be led away by rhodomontade in literature and epigraphs.

It will also be noticed that there is no chapter on the administrative set-up of the times in the present work. In view of its intrinsic value, I have dealt with it separately at length in a companion volume to this work. Like political history, it is also based mostly on available contemporary sources. A specialised treatment of that subject has been suggested by its special importance in the epoch that preceded Muslim rule in India.

In the preparation of this volume, I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my *guru* and supervisor, Professor C. D. Chatterjee, who has not only guided my studies and offered numerous invaluable suggestions, but has also taken pains to go through its pages. I am indebted for his help, guidance and encouragement to a degree for which no amount of thanks would suffice. I am also grateful to the late Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji and the late Dr. J. N. Banerjea for several helpful suggestions. The many debts I owe to the published works of others are duly acknowledged in the text and notes.

Further, I am under no small obligation to my friend, Shri J. P. Misra, and my pupils, Drs. A. K. Srivastava and K. S. Saxena, for their willing help and assistance in the preparation of this work. Thanks are also due to the University Grants Commission for help towards its publication and to the Proprietors, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Varanasi, for undertaking its publication.

Lastly, I wish to express my profound respect and gratitude to my beloved mother who, through her affectionate encouragement, has, more than anything, made possible the preparation of this work.

For the sake of convenience from all points of view, we have used the form Sthāneśvara instead of Sthāṇvīśvara throughout the text. The system of transliteration adopted will be apparent from the following examples :—

Ahichchhatrā, Kāñchī, Kṛishṇagupta Śaśāṅka, Siṁhanāda, Lāṭadeśa, Daṇḍa :

Independence Day, 1971,
The University,
Lucknow.

Bireshwar Nath Srivastava

ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.O.R.I.	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*
A.M.M.K.	*Āryamañjuśrīmūlkalpa*
A.S.I.	*Archaeological Survey of India*
A.S.I.R.	*Archaeological Survey of India Reports*
A.S.R.	*Archaeological Survey Reports (Cunningham)*
A.S.W.I.	*Archaeological Survey of Western India*
Beal *(Records)*	*Si-Yu-Ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World*
C.C.Br.M.	*Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum*
C.C.I.M.	*Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*
C.I.I.	*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*
E.C.	*Epigraphia Carnatica*
E.H.I.	*Early History of India*
E.I.	*Epigraphia Indica*
H.C.	*Harshacharita, (tr.) Cowell and Thomas*
H.M.H.I.	*History of Mediaeval Hindu India*
I.A.	*Indian Antiquary*
I.C.	*Indian Culture*
I.H.Q.	*Indian Historical Quarterly*
J.A.	*Journal Asiatique*
J.A.H.R.S. *(J.A.R.S.)*	*Journal of the Assam Historical Research Society*
J.A.S.B.	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*
J.B.O.R.S.	*Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*
J.B.B.R.A.S.	*Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
J.D.L.	*Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta*
J.I.H.	*Journal of Indian History*
J.R.A.S.	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
J.R.A.S.B. Letters	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters*
Life	*Life of Hiuen-Tsiang by Hwui-Li*
M.A.R.	*Mysore Archaeological Survey Report*
M.A.S.B.	*Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*
M.A.S.I.	*Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*

P.H.A.I.	*Political History of Ancient India*
P.I.H.C.	*Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*
R.T.	*Rājataraṅgiṇī*
Watters.	*On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*

INTRODUCTION

The Seventh Century of the history of India witnessed partly the fullest glory of the Gupta Age and, partly, also its decline. The mighty Gupta Empire had already collapsed; over its ruins, Emperor Yaśodharman had made a valiant attempt to build a new one; and we cannot possibly deny that his efforts proved futile. Epigraphic records bear sufficient testimony to the fact that he proved himself to be a military genius of such a high order that he had gone far beyond the reach of his predecessors like Samudragupta and Chandragupta II, or of his successors like Harshavardhana and Pulakeśin II. We find no crowned head to be ranked with him, whether flourishing many centuries before or even after him. Yaśodharman exercised sovereign sway practically over the whole of Northern India and the Deccan or, as defined by his panegyrist, from the Lauhitya to the *Paśchimapayodhi*, and from the snow-capped mountains from which emerges the River Gaṅgā up to as far as Mahendragiri. There are undoubtedly many magniloquents in his epigraph in the delineation of his unique achievements, but the limits of his empire as defined in it are certainly not characterised by Oriental hyperbole. The only *Rājachakravartin* with whom we may venture to institute a comparison with him, is Chandragupta Maurya, who had equally succeeded in building up a vast empire like him; but while that Mauryan sovereign was fortunate enough to bequeath it to his son and successor and through him again, to his illustrious grandson, Aśoka Maurya, Yaśodharman was unfortunate in that respect. History is yet to show that any one in his line had inherited the vast sphere of his sovereignty. The emergence of that mighty monarch in the political arena is, really, as mysterious as his sudden disappearance. He traversed the political firmament with meteoric brilliance, leaving a trail of glory behind. Indeed, that glory was not shared for many centuries by any ruler of India, till the Mughal Emperor, Akbar the Great, consolidated his power over this subcontinent. India had witnessed in the past but rise and fall of many empires, and the disintegration of Yaśodharman's empire, is, therefore, not a new thing in her annals. But, if there is any uniqueness in it, it is its sudden appearance and disappearance. What happened after its collapse, is, however, an old story. Over its ruins appeared many kingdoms and principalities, the rulers of which were vying with each other to rise higher and higher in temporal power, whether they had the ability or even the potentiality to retain it or not. Such is the picture of the Seventh Century in which we shall see the appearance of many new kingdoms and also the disappearance of some. This constant integration and disintegration due to the policy of self-aggrandisement of the rulers, which the ancients have termed as *Mātsyanyāya*, persisted throughout the century; and though a Harshavardhana or a Pulakeśin had made frantic efforts to put an end to this, and thereby deter the country from its ceaseless onward march towards devastation and destruction of its towns and villages, of its economic life and prosperity, and, above all, of its national unity, they shared the same fate as Yaśodharman. While Harsha left no male heir to succeed him, Pulakeśin was lucky to have a worthy son who could restore the fallen fortunes of his family to its pristine glory.

What we have seen is the picture of the Seventh Century in the background of the one that preceded it. The glory of the Gupta Age had not completely faded away when Harshavardhana came to the throne. In fact, it was still shining during the whole period of his reign, but we see only the twilight glow of it when Vishṇugupta Chandrāditya came to the throne. In the later part of the sixth century, ambitious monarchs like Iśānavarman and Prabhākaravardhana, and even Mahāsenagupta, had made attempts to build up powerful empires but, for reasons unknown to us, their efforts proved futile. Harsha, however, was fortunate enough in that respect and perhaps Pulakeśin too; but for reasons stated above, their ambitious projects proved equally abortive. As in the case of Yaśodharman, so also in the case of Harsha the empire built by him lasted only for a generation. When his empire collapsed, new kingdoms and principalities emerged, and it is the history of those states, both big and small, that has been sketched in the following pages.

A question that has often occurred to us while surveying the political condition of the Seventh Century is : what forces were then in operation, which had prevented the cohesion of states and formation of a lasting empire ? Was there no ruler capable enough to lay the foundation of a powerful empire that would last for several generations, as was done by Chandragupta Maurya, Kanishka I or Samudragupta ? Or, were there any disruptive forces which had persistently stood in its way ? The answer is indeed difficult. It was certainly not due to the sporadic raids of the Huns or the Arabs, for in the Seventh Century, at any rate, their ingress was not of much political consequence. Such barbarian onslaughts were successfully dealt with by powerful monarchs like Prabhākaravardhana and Dadda III. It was also not due to the cultural conflicts of the peoples living in different parts of this subcontinent of ours, North or South, East or West. On the other hand, though political unity was lacking, its cultural unity persisted. For, from the standpoint of Hindu culture, India was then one and indivisible. It was also not due to the diversity of races and ethnic types then spread over this vast country, since, whatever their origin, they considered India to be their common Motherland and worked unitedly for its prosperity. The linguistic differences perhaps had the least effect in resisting the foundation of a mighty empire like that of the Mauryas or of the Guptas; and we can strongly support our opinion by referring to the Edicts of Aśoka written in different regional languages, both Indian and foreign, all of which were then current side by side. In the Seventh Century, Sanskrit was the predominant language of this country in the sense that it was not merely the State language but also the medium on the basis of which education was imparted in all centres of learning, including the University of Nalanda. The question of linguistic differences should, therefore, be also ruled out. The reason is, therefore, to be sought not in the sphere of culture, language or racial diversity, but in some other quarter.

After carefully analysing the causes that had led to the origin and downfall of empires, kingdoms and principalities, we have come to the conclusion that this lack of political unity, particularly in the second half of the Seventh Century, was entirely due to the absence of a strong hand like that of Chandragupta Maurya or Samudragupta, Yaśodharman or Harshavardhana, so as to keep in check the naturally repellent elements of the body politic in their continuous gyrations and thereby turn the tide of disintegration into integration. We are indeed sorry to admit that it did not fructify, till the establishment of Mughal paramountcy in this country. Thus the glory of the Gupta Age completely faded away with the termination of the Seventh Century; but the historian cannot possibly overlook the fact that what was lost in the sphere of politics was made up to a great extent in that of culture. The fame of India, in that age, as the land of learning, had spread far beyond her natural frontiers in every direction as evidenced by foreign travellers Shui-Ching-Chu or I-tsing, Alberuni or Tāranātha. The spiritual supremacy of India remained unchallenged during the whole period of our historical survey. Indeed, India still held the torch of wisdom as before.

HARSHA AND HIS TIMES

CHAPTER I

THE PUSHPABHŪTIS OF STHĀNEŚVARA–I

(From Ādityavardhana up to the Accession of Harsha)

In the 7th century A.D., light again dawns with the advent of the hero of the Pushpabhūti dynasty of Sthāneśvara, emerging out like the Sun through the dark clouds that had enveloped the fate of Northern India for nearabout two centuries.[1] And Harshavardhana rightly deserves our attention.[2] The conquests that he made and the unification of the country that he effected after a period of great turmoil and anarchy have focussed the attention of history on him. The credit is all the more great, because Harsha did not receive any good legacy from his immediate ancestors; rather he himself had to muster strong and consolidate all the resources at his command with the result, that he achieved immortal fame to be one of the illustrious figures of Indian history.

The Early Pushpabhūtis

The founder of the Pushpabhūti dynasty, according to Bāṇa, was Pushpabhūti.[3] But the epigraphs of Harshavardhana trace his genealogy only from Naravardhana who established a small kingdom for himself in the upper valley of the Yamunā with Sthāneśvara as the seat of his government.[1] The reason as to why Bāṇa is altogether silent about the predecessors of Prabhākaravardhana is inexplicable. What appears to us to be the real cause for this omission is that Bāṇa had no real interest in the history of those kings since they were not actually very prominent in history. The other probable reason seems to be that the glorification of Prabhākaravardhana's predecessors might, to a certain extent, eclipse his glory and, therefore, it is better, as he felt, that they should be passed unnoticed. We, however, do not believe that Bāṇa did not know anything about the ancestors of Prabhākaravardhana when he was so intimately connected with Harsha as being his court-poet. As for a similar instance, we may refer to the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta, where Harisheṇa did not feel the need of glorifying the earlier Gupta monarchs, lest his master's achievements might suffer in comparison. One thing is, however, certain; and that is, the seal-inscriptions of Harsha have presented before us the list of his ancestors upto the fifth generation upwards. Otherwise the conclusion that would have naturally been drawn by reading Bāṇa's work is that Harsha's father, Prabhākaravardhana, was the son and successor of Pushpabhūti. In the present state of our knowledge it is not possible to say precisely the relation of Naravardhana, the great grandfather of Prabhākaravardhana,

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[1] The ancient city of Sthāneśvara corresponds to modern Thaneswar in the Ambala district of East Punjab.

[2] All the inscriptions of Emperor Harsha mention him by this name except the Sonpat Copper Seal which appears to recall his full name—Harshavardhana—in the traditional style of his family (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 232). The *Harshacharita* also refers to him as Harshadeva (Kashmir Edition, p. 119), a name to be noticed in the Nausari Copper Plate and the Aphsad Stone Inscription (*I.A.*, xiii, pp. 73, 79; *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 207) as well.

[3] Bühler suggests that the name should be read as '*Pushyabhūti*', as many proper names in "bhūti" have the name of a constellation for their first member (*E.I.*, i., p. 68, n.5). We have accepted "Pushpabhūti" as the correct reading of the name of the founder of the dynasty to which Harsha belonged since it has been suggested by Bāṇa, the court-poet of Harsha,

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[1] It may be noted here that in respect of the genealogy of the Vardhanas of Sthāneśvara there is complete unanimity between the different epigraphs. The Banskhera and the Madhuban Copper Plate inscriptions (*E.I.*, iv, p. 210 ff; *ibid.*, i, p. 72 ff), and the Sonpat and the Nālandā seals of Harsha (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 231 ff ; *E.I.*, xxi, p. 74 ff) record the following genealogy:

Mahārāja Naravardhana	m. Vajriṇīdevī
Mahārāja Rājyavardhana	m. Apsarodevī
Mahārāja Ādityavardhana	m. Mahāsenaguptādevī
Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Prabhākaravardhana	m. Yaśomatīdevī

Param. Mahdh. Rājyavardhana   Param. Mahdh. Harsha with Pushpabhūti, the founder of the royal house of Sthāneśvara. The historicity of Pushpabhūti, except for the mention by Bāṇa in his work, cannot be established. The first ruler of the royal family that was founded by Pushpabhūti affixing the word "Vardhana" after his name was Naravardhana, so far as it appears from the inscriptions of Harsha. The reason as to why the predecessors of Naravardhana, if any, upto Pushpabhūti, have not been mentioned in those inscriptions, appears to be that Naravardhana, though a descendant of King Pushpabhūti, was the founder of a new royal house. The uniform method followed by the composers of the inscriptions of Harsha in respect of affixing "Vardhana" after the name can be only due to what has been suggested by us.[1]

Not much is known about the kings who preceded Harshavardhana except that his grandfather, Ādityavardhana, married Mahāsenaguptā, probably a princess of the Later Gupta house of Mālava. Prabhākaravardhana, father of Harsha, was undoubtedly an ambitious king and, according to Bāṇa, made extensive conquests to raise the status of his family. He has been described by Bāṇa as, "a lion to the Hūṇa deer, a burning fever to the King of the Indus Land, a troubler of the sleep of Gujarat, a bilious plague to that scent-elephant, the lord of Gandhāra, a looter to the lawlessness of the Lāṭas, an axe to the creeper of Mālwa's glory."[2] Thus, he became "famed far and wide under a second name Pratāpaśīla",[3] and for the first time in his family assumed the title of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*, while his own ancestors used the title of Mahārāja only.[1] But here we are confronted with a problem: did Prabhākaravardhana really annex all the territories mentioned by Bāṇa? That there was a struggle for political supremacy over the Punjab between Prabhākaravardhana and the Hūṇas cannot be questioned in view of the fact that even during his last days he was fighting with them, as stated by Bāṇa in a different context.[2] The aged king, even when he was seriously ill, could not give up the idea of retaining the former Hūṇa Kingdom within his empire.[3] Likewise, the fact that he had brought two princes of Eastern Mālava and kept them with him at his court, whatever may be the purpose, also suggests that it was one of his protected states and thus included in his empire although perhaps due to the nearness of relationship with the then ruler Mahāsenagupta prevented him from assuming its direct control. The contemporary king of Eastern Mālava obviously continued to rule but under his protection.[1] In view of these facts, the conclusion that can

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[1] A parallel instance may be seen in the inscriptions of the Later Guptas of Mālava and Magadha. Ādityasena, who belonged to this royal house, has traced his genealogy to Kṛishṇagupta, the founder of the Later Gupta house of Mālava (Aphsad Stone Inscription, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 202 ff). But Jīvitagupta II, a successor of Ādityasena, has traced his genealogy from Mādhavagupta and not Kṛishṇagupta as it was the former's son, Ādityasena, who was the founder of a new line of independent rulers in Magadha (Deo-Baranark Inscription, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 215 ff) and who was also not directly connected with Devagupta of Mālava.

[2] *H. C.*, p. 101.
हूणहरिणकेसरी सिन्धुराजज्वरो गूर्जरप्रजागरो गान्धाराधिपगन्धद्विपकूटपाकलो लाटपाटवपाटच्चरो मालवलक्ष्मीलतापरशुः...... ।
—Text, p. 120.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 101.
प्रतापशील इति प्रथितापरनामा...
—Text, p. 120.

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[1] See foot-note 1 on page 4.

[2] *H. C.*, p. 132.

अथ कदाचिद्राजा राज्यवर्धनं कवचहरमाहूय हूणान्हन्तुं हरिणानिव हरिर्हरिणेशकिशोरमपरिमितवलानुयातं चिरंतनैरमात्यैरनुरक्तैश्च महासामन्तैः कृत्वा साभिसरमुत्तरापथं प्राहिणोत् ।

—Text, p. 150.

[3] We definitely know that the Hūṇas, who had entered India through the north-western passes, had gradually extended their sway over the whole of the Punjab, eastern Rajputana, the former Gwalior state and Eran in Saugor District (*E.I.*,i,p.239; *C.I.I.*,iii,p.162ff; *Ibid*.,p.159 ff). During the reign of Bhānugupta, however, they were defeated at Eran by the Gupta Emperor himself with the help of his feudatories (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 92 ff). A crushing defeat was again inflicted on the Hūṇa army fleeing from Eran at Mandasor by another Gupta feudatory, Yaśodharman, who was ruling over Mālava with Ujjain as his headquarters (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 146 ff). After these defeats the Hūṇas seem to have receded towards the Punjab and were in wait for better times. But, after the death of Bhānugupta, Yaśodharman appears to have become independent and overrun the whole of northern India including the former Gupta and Hūṇa empires as he has boasted in his Mandasor Stone Pillar Inscription (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 146 ff). The success of Yaśodharman was, however, shortlived and, after him, his vast empire was parcelled out among his feudatories. Prabhākaravardhana, who was the ruler of Sthāneśvara at that time, seems to have annexed Eastern Punjab to his ancestral kingdom in his zeal for conquest. The Hūṇas, who had been waiting for better times must have endeavoured to reconquer at least the regions of the former Hūṇa empire and this must have naturally brought them in conflict with Prabhākara, who was now in possession of a part of it.

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[1] If we look back into history, it appears that Mālava was divided into two parts, Eastern and Western, the former being known by the name of Ākara and the latter, by Avanti. The Nasik Cave inscriptions of Puḷumāvi and the famous Junagadh Rock Inscription of Rudradāman I clearly point to this fact. The Gupta inscriptions also seem to suggest that Mālava had two divisions though they do not clearly mention the same. Confirmation of this fact, however,is available in a Chinese work, the *Si-yu-ki* of Hsuan Chuang, which clearly suggests that Mālava had two divisions of which the western part was known as Mo-la-po (Mālava). While the rulers in the line of Kṛishṇagupta were ruling over Eastern Mālava, the ancestors of Śīlāditya were ruling over Mo-la-po or Western Mālava. Evidently, therefore, both the parts were known as Mālava in the Gupta as well as the post-Gupta period although they had separate political entities, in the same way as Gandhāra was divided into two parts, but passed under a common name, i.e., Gandhāra.

The mention of Mālava by Bāṇa appears to us to be with reference to Western and not to Eastern Mālava. Prabhākaravardhana might have proved to be "an axe to the creeper of Mālwa's glory" in respect of Western Mālava or Mo-la-po, the ancestral kingdom of the Emperor Yaśodharman Vishṇuvardhana which undoubtedly was considerably glorified through him. On the other hand, Eastern Mālava, ever since the time of Kṛishṇagupta up to the time of Mādhavagupta, was ruled over by a chain of non-descripts, whose names would never have been recorded in history but for the Aphsad Stone Inscription of Mādhavagupta's worthy son, Ādityasena, who became the independent ruler of Eastern India which once formed a part of Harsha's empire. Moreover, an able and shrewd writer like Bāṇa should not be expected to defame Prabhākaravardhana as being ungenerous to that particular royal house from which his own mother had come when his main purpose was to glorify the achievements of that monarch. We are, therefore, strongly of opinion that the aforesaid reference to Mālava in the *Harshacharita* is in respect of Western Mālava where the successor of Yaśodharman Vishṇuvardhana was then ruling. It recalls to our mind the most generous gesture shown by Rudradāman I to his father-in-law, Śiva Śrī Sātakarṇi, who was twice defeated by him but on account of the nearness of relationship was not killed in the battlefield be drawn is that Prabhākaravardhana also defeated the rulers of Gurjaradeśa, Lāṭa, Sindhu and Gandhāra as mentioned euphemistically by Bāṇa. That Prabhākaravardhana had conquered and annexed the neighbouring territories is also suggested by his imperialistic titles *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja* which, as stated above, were not borne by any of his predecessors mentioned in the inscriptions of his son, Harshavardhana. A proud man, he was vexed by his proud ambitions and as in the poetic words of the biographer of Harsha "levelling on every side hills and hollows, clumps and forests, trees and grass, thickets and anthills, mountains and caves, the broad paths of his armies seemed to portion out the earth for the support of his dependants. By deterring all enemies his own prowess annoyed him as much as that of others, leaving his passion for battle ungratified......A furious onslaught he counted a present, war a favour, the approach of battle a festival, a foe the discovery of a treasure, a host of enemies the acme of prosperity, a challenge to conflict a boon, a sudden onset an ovation, the fall of sword strokes a shower of wealth."[1] The Madhuban Copper-plate Inscription has, therefore, rightly described him as "one whose fame spread beyond

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(दक्षिणापथपतेस्सातकर्णेर्द्विरपि नीर्व्याजमवजीत्यावजीत्य सम्बन्धाविदूरतया अनुत्सादना... *I.A.*, vii, p. 257). He spared the life of his father-in-law although the latter was pursuing an aggressive policy even in respect of the territory of his own son-in-law. If a foreign ruler like the aforesaid Mahākshatrapa was so much influenced by the traditional sanctity of relationship typical to this land, a ruler like Prabhākaravardhana need not be thought of to have proved an "axe" to the glory of his own maternal uncle's kingdom (Eastern Mālava). It was absurd to think that he forced his maternal uncle, Mahāsenagupta, an independent ruler of Mālava, to be reduced to the degraded position of a vassal chief by forcibly imposing political thraldom upon him. It may, however, be noted here that the reference to Western Mālava by Bāṇa in the present context under the name of Mālava must not be taken in the sense that Eastern Mālava was not, then, known as Mālava but passing under a different name. Contemporary literary and epigraphic records show that both Eastern and Western Mālava were known as Mālava, as we shall see below.

[1] *H.C.*, pp. 101-2.

the four seas and to whom submitted the other kings in power or love."[1]

The Extent of the Empire of the Pushpabhūtis under Prabhākaravardhana

The kingdom inherited by Prabhākaravardhana from his father Ādityavardhana was undoubtedly a small one. It was one of the vassal states in the empire of Yaśodharman and, before him, in that of the Imperial Guptas.[2] The small territory over which Prabhākaravardhana came to rule after the death of his father probably extended as far as the Yamunā in the East, the northern frontiers of the Mālava Kingdom in the South, the River Śatadru (Sutlej) in the West and to the Himalayas in the North. We do not find any definite information about the extent of his ancestral kingdom in any one of the relevant sources, but the information supplied by Bāṇa about his conquests leads us to determine approximately the limits of his ancestral kingdom, as stated above. When he died, the limits of the Pushpabhūti kingdom or preferably empire, had extended far and wide, except in the East, in which direction lay the powerful Maukhari kingdom. The empire of Prabhākaravardhana at the time of his death included Gandhāra, obviously the portion of it lying to the east of the Indus, Sindhu (Sindh), Gurjaradeśa (Gujrat) and Mālava (Malwa) and thus extended as far as the river Indus in the West and the river Narmadā in the South, the latter continuing to be the acknowledged southern boundary even of the empire of Harsha. It is more than evident that Prabhākaravardhana did not want to measure his strength with the contemporary Maukhari King, Avantivarman, because of the fact that the latter was one of the two most powerful rulers of

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1. *E.I.*, i, p. 72.

चतुःसमुद्रातिक्क्रान्तकीर्तिः प्रतापानुरागोपनतान्यराजो......

2. This is proved by the fact that in the epigraphs of Harsha also the first three kings receive the simple title *Mahārāja* only. It follows that their power was not great and even they were not independent, for in the fourth, fifth, sixth and later centuries of our era the title *Mahārāja* was commonly given to the vassals, as the numerous inscriptions of the period prove.

Northern India in those days. Prabhākaravardhana probably felt that it would be unwise on his part to make his most powerful ally an enemy and thereby defeat his own purpose of extending his kingdom in the west as well as in the south, which was an easy affair for him in view of his military superiority to other rulers of the adjoining territories. The policy adopted by him in this respect was the same as one pursued by the Gupta emperor Samudragupta in respect of the powerful kingdom of the Vākāṭakas, which he had left untouched, although he had extended his victorious arms very far in the south. And, as we know, the very same policy was also followed by his illustrious successor Chandragupta II, who even enlisted the sympathy and support of the Vākāṭakas by establishing a matrimonial alliance.[1]

Early Life of Harshavardhana

From the *Harshacharita* we learn that Prabhākaravardhana's Chief Queen was Yaśomatī who is admitted by Hoernle to be the daughter of king Yaśodharman Vikramāditya of Mālava.[2] She gave birth to two sons and a daughter

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[1] Similarly, Prabhākaravardhana also cemented the friendly relations between the two royal houses of the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis by accepting Grahavarman as his son-in-law.

[2] *H.C.*, pp. 102, 153. Bāṇa has mentioned her name as "Yaśovatī", but the epigraphs of Harsha call her "Yaśomatī". Probably this mistake was committed by some later copyist and not by the author.

The theory that Yaśomatī was the daughter of Yaśodharman Vishṇuvardhana was started by that learned scholar obviously on the partial similarity which the name of the princess bears with that of her father (*J.R.A.S.*, 1903, p. 553 ff). It may be noted here that there is no mention of Yaśomatī's parentage anywhere in the contemporary or later records, indigenous or foreign, literary or epigraphic. We, therefore, do not know from which particular royal family she had come; nor have we any information, whatsoever about the name of her father and mother. It must, therefore, be admitted here that there is no positive evidence to support Hoernle's theory that Yaśodharman was the father of Yaśomatī. The other theory started by that learned scholar is that Śīlāditya described by Hsuan Chuang as the ruler of Mo-la-po in his *Si-yu-ki* (Watters, i, p. 261) and by Kalhaṇa as an ally of Pravarasena (II) of Kashmir in his *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (iii, 330), were one and the same person and that he was the son and successor of King of whom Rājyavardhana was the eldest. The second son of King Prabhākaravardhana was Harsha, who, according to our computation, was born in 590 A.D. About the date and the time of his birth it is stated in the *Harshacharita* that he was born "in the month Jyaishṭha, on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight, the Pleiads being in the ascendant, just after the twilight time, when the young night had begun to climb, a sudden cry of women arose in the harem......'your majesty, you are blessed with the birth of a second son' ".[1] And when

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Yaśodharman. In the Kashmir Chronicle, Śīlāditya has been mentioned as the son of Vikramāditya, but it is altogether silent about the identity of that Vikramāditya, or of the kingdom of which he was the ruler. The theory of Hoernle that Śīlāditya was the son of Yaśodharman thus awaits confirmation. It may further be noted here that there is nothing on record to show that Yaśomatī was the sister of the aforesaid Śīlāditya or a princess of the royal house of Mo-la-po.

Our presumption is that Yaśomatī came from some royal family of Northern India with which the Pushpabhūtis were on very friendly terms. Since Mahārāja Ādityavardhana did not pursue any aggressive policy like that of his son and successor Prabhākaravardhana, many neighbouring kings might have maintained cordial relations with him, including of course the one of Mo-la-po whom we have no cogent reasons to exclude from consideration in this particular case. We, however, feel that the royal houses with which Prabhākaravardhana was on hostile terms like that of Lāṭa, cannot be considered to be the one from which his wife had come. The theory of Vaidya that Yaśomatī was the daughter of some *Sāmantarāja* on the ground that her brother has been described in the *Harshacharita* as Yaśomatī's brother (यशोमत्या भ्राता) without any reference, whatsoever, to the dignity or heritage which he could justly claim as a prince of the royal blood, somehow does not appeal to us (*H.M. H. I.*, i., p.38). Bāṇa must not be expected to satisfy the inquisitiveness of modern historians on each and every point of historical interest.

[1] *H. C.*, p. 109.

ततश्च प्राप्ते ज्येष्ठामूलीये मासि बहुलासु बहुलपक्षद्वादश्यां व्यतीते प्रदोषसमये समारुरुक्षति क्षपायौवने सहसैवान्तःपुरे समुदपादि कोलाहलः स्त्रीजनस्य। निर्गत्य च ससंभ्रमं यशोवत्याः स्वयमेव हृदयनिर्विशेषा धात्र्याः सुता सुपात्रेति नाम्ना राज्ञः पादयोर्निपत्य 'देव ! दिष्ट्या वर्धसे द्वितीयसुतजन्मना' इति व्याहरन्ती पूर्णपात्रं जहार।

—Text, p. 128.

"Rājya was nearing his sixth year while Harsha could just manage five or six paces with the support of his nurse's finger"...that Queen Yaśomatī became pregnant with Rājyaśrī".[1]

In the *Harshacharita*, there is a reference to another brother of Harsha named Kṛishṇa who has been scarcely noticed.[2] Unfortunately, Bāṇa also refers to him only thrice in the aforesaid work and thus the problem of his identity has, so far, remained unsolved. From the context it clearly appears that he was alive when Harsha was on the throne. Since Yaśomatī had only three issues, we are led to believe that Kṛishṇa was born of a different mother, or, in other words, was a step-brother of Rājya and Harsha and was younger to both of them.[3] Nothing more about him can be said with certainty in the present state of our knowledge, but there is no doubt that he remained loyal to his royal brothers. The theory of his premature death is not altogether incredible.

About the time of Rājyaśrī's birth, Yaśomatī's brother, whose name has not been mentioned in the *Harshacharita*, "presented his son Bhaṇḍi, a boy about eight years of age, to serve the young princes."[4] After sometime, the Emperor

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1. *H. C.*, pp. 115-16.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 41, 44.
3. Bāṇa makes definite mention of the "co-wives" and "rival queens" of Yaśomatī (*H. C.*, pp. 107, 151).
4. *H. C.*, p. 116.

अस्मिन्नेव तु काले देव्या यशोमत्या भ्राता सुतमष्टवर्ष......भण्डिनामानमनुचरं कुमारयोरर्पितवान् ।

—Text, p. 135.

In the present state of our knowledge it is extremely difficult to say to which particular royal family of Northern India Yaśomatī and her unnamed brother and his son, Bhaṇḍi, belonged. We have stated above, giving reasons, that the theory of Hoernle is unacceptable to us in view of his arguments which are highly fallacious. Unless fresh light is thrown on the ancestry of Yaśomatī by some dependable source of information, nothing can be said definitely about the royal family from which she had come. The *Harshacharita*, unfortunately, is altogether silent on the question of her parentage. We, however, have good reasons to

Prabhākaravardhana appointed Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta, the two sons of the King of Mālava, "to wait upon the princes", Rājya and Harsha.[1]

About 604 A.D., that is to say, towards the close of the reign of Prabhākaravardhana, the Hūṇas raided the northwest frontiers of his empire and thus became a menace to the peace and prosperity of that area. In order to put an end to the trouble created by them, he sent his eldest son, Rājya, who was just a youth of eighteen, "at the head of an immense force attended by ancient advisers and devoted feudatories

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believe that she belonged to one of the distinguished ruling families of Northern India so as to be worthy of being the consort of Emperor Prabhākaravardhana. It will thus be seen that we are at present also unable to say anything precisely about the ancestry of Bhaṇḍi.

In the opinion of the present writer, the parents of Queen Yaśomatī were alive at the time of her self-immolation. This fact has been suggested by a significant passage in the *Harshacharita* (pp. 154-55). Attention of the readers may be drawn to the fact that she did not perform *satī* in the strictest sense of the term but burnt herself to death before the death of her husband took place. Before committing self-immolation she is alleged to have bid farewell to some of her nearest and dearest ones who were not, then, physically present at Sthāneśvara. Thus, addressing her son, Rājya, and daughter Rājyaśrī, she bade farewell and she did the very same thing addressing her father and mother as well. She did not take leave of Harsha, because he was present at the time when his mother committed suicide. Since both Rājyavardhana and Rājyaśrī, her son and daughter, were alive at the time of her immolation, the presumption that arises is, that her father and mother were also alive at that time. She addressed only those of her beloved ones who were alive but were unable to be present when she was about to depart from this mortal world. From the context in which she is alleged to have remembered her parents, one is apt to infer that they were alive like her son and daughter.

It is really unfortunate that even from the aforesaid passage of the *Harshacharita*, we are unable to derive any information about the identity of Yaśomatī's father, who might have been ruling in some distant part of Northern India or of the Deccan, at the time when the royal family of the Pushpabhūtis was overwhelmed with successive tragic deaths, as we all know.

[1] *H. C.*, p. 119 ff.

towards the north to attack the Hūṇas."[1] Harsha followed him with a large cavalry but stayed behind at the foot of the hills probably with a view to guarding the rear and there kept himself busy in the pleasures of the chase.[2]

When the two brothers were thus engaged, Kuraṅgaka, a royal messenger, brought the news that their father lay seriously ill with "a violent fever."[3] Harsha immediately rode back post-haste to the capital and found his father on the death-bed attended by the royal physician Rasāyana, a "master of the *Āyur-veda* in all its eight divisions", and another young physician'Sushena'.[4] He immediately dispatched fast messengers

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1. *H. C.*, p. 132.

   अथ कदाचिद्राजा राज्यवर्द्धनं कवचहरमाहूय हूणान्हन्तुं हरिणानिव हरिर्हरिणेशकिशोरमपरिमितबलानुयातं चिरंतनैरमात्यैरनुरक्तैश्च महासामन्तैः कृत्वा साभिसरमुत्तरापथं प्राहिणोत् ।

   —Text, p. 150.

   It seems that when the king was old and the princes too young, the Hūṇas, who had already been subdued by Prabhākara during the early period of his rule (*H.C.*, p. 101), as already stated above, tried to regain their former possessions, just as they had made a similar attempt during the later days of Kumāragupta I. But in both the attempts they miscalculated the strength of the heirs–apparent, Skandagupta and Rājyavardhana respectively, who proved to be chips of the old block, and inflicted crushing defeats on them.

   Bühler, however, is of opinion that "the issue of this expedition does not seem to have been favourable, as Bāṇa speaks on Rājyavardhana's return after hard fights, but not of booty brought back" (*E.I.*, i, p. 69, fn). Majumdar states that "the result of this expedition is not known." The fact that the power of the Hūṇas was crushed after the expedition of Rājyavardhana is apparent from the fact that the next when we hear about the Hūṇas is only in the 9th Century A. D. (*E. I.*, ix, p.l).

2. *Ibid.*

   Bhaṇḍi had also accompanied the princes in their expedition against the Hūṇas. But he seems to have stayed on with Harsha as he returned to the capital along with him on receiving the news of Prabhākara's illness (*H. C.*, p. 135).

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 133-34.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 136, 144.

   Julien, in his translation of Hsuan Chuang's travels, has mentioned that Prabhākaravardhana was assassinated by Śaśāṅka, the king of to his brother, who had gone towards the Punjab to drive away the Hūṇas beyond the frontiers. On receiving the news of his father's serious illness, Rājya hastened back to the capital; but when he actually reached the city of Sthāneśvara, the death of his father had already taken place and his mother had plunged into fire on the bank of the Sarasvatī river "to die while still unwidowed" and "to go before, like the dust of her husband's feet, to announce his coming to the heavens."[1] In his overwhelming sorrow, being subject to the flame of filial grief, Rājyavardhana determined to become an ascetic and to leave the throne to Harsha, but the latter politely refused the offer.

Since Rājyavardhana was the heir-apparent, he had to ascend the throne even though he was not fit enough to bear the burden of an empire, because of his tender age, he being still in his teens when he was called upon by tragic circumstances, to assume the reigns of the government.[2] The two brothers had hardly recovered from their grief when suddenly Saṁvādaka, a messenger of Rājyaśrī, arrived and disclosed the sad news : "On the very day on which the King's death was rumoured, His Majesty Grahavarman was by the wicked lord of Mālava cut off from the living along with his noble deeds. Rājyaśrī also, the princess, has been confined like a brigand's wife with a pair of iron fetters kissing her feet, and cast into prison at Kānyakubja. There is moreover a report

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Karṇasuvarṇa (cf. Fitz Edward Hall, *Vāsavadattā*, p. 52). This is undoubtedly a glaring mistake on the part of the French *savant* since it was not Prabhākara but his son, Rājyavardhana, who was murdered by Śaśāṅka. It may be mentioned here that we cannot blame that Chinese traveller for having committed that serious historical blunder. He has correctly stated the real historical fact (see Watters, i, p. 343; *Life*, p.85).

1. *H. C.*, pp. 154-55.

2. Smith believes that there was "a party at the court inclined to favour the succession of the younger brother but all intrigues were frustrated by the return of Rājya" (*Early History of India*, p. 349). But there does not seem to be any such indication in any of the sources whatsoever.

that the villain deeming the army leaderless, proposes to invade and seize this country as well."[1]

The news of the murder suddenly turned the grief at the royal court of Sthāneśvara into a "deadly frown." Rājyavardhana burst out in his wrath : "Mālavas to maltreat the race of Pushpabhūti ? This is the hind clutching the lion's mane, the frog slapping the cobra, the calf taking the tiger captive", and addressing Harsha, said, "this day I go to lay the royal house of Mālava low in ruin......Let all the kings and elephants stay with you. Only Bhaṇḍi here must follow me with some ten thousand horse."[2] But Harsha was not in the least willing to stay behind at that critical juncture. He entreated his brother earnestly to allow him to accompany him. Rājya was, however, a shrewd prince and he was alert not to leave the capital unguarded when he had already known the designs of the Mālava king. Besides, the Hūṇas on the north-west frontier had been routed only a short time back and seeing Sthāneśvara off its guard, they might have been tempted to regain their supremacy in the Punjab once again.[3] So he very tactfully told Harsha : "a concourse of lions in the matter of a deer is too degrading......Be pleased to stay."[1] Rājya then left the capital for Kānyakubja with a mobile force composed mainly of cavalry for taking swift action against the murderer of his brother-in-law. It is more than evident from the contemporary records, both literary and epigraphic, that he met Devagupta, the King of Mālava, who was coming to attack Sthāneśvara from Kānyakubja. However, in spite of his predetermined plan and preparations, his military strength was not adequate enough to withstand that of the Pushpabhūtis. Rājyavardhana adequately fulfilled his self-imposed task by killing the king of Mālava in battle and thus avenging the murder of Grahavarman Maukhari.[2]

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[1] *H. C.*, p. 173.

'...यतो यस्मिन्नहन्यवनिपतिरुपरत इत्यभूद्वार्ता तस्मिन्नेव देवो ग्रहवर्मा दुरात्मना मालवराजेन जीवलोकमात्मनः सुकृतेन सह त्याजितः। भर्तृदारिकापि राज्यश्रीः कालायसनिगडयुगलचुम्बितचरणा चौराङ्गनेव संयता कान्यकुब्जे कारायां निक्षिप्ता। किंवदन्ती च यथा किलाऽनायकं साधनं मत्वा जिघृक्षुः सुदुर्मतिरेतामपि भुवमाजिगमिषति'।

—Text, p. 183.

[2] *H. C.*, p. 175.

[3] Curiously enough, Majumdar opines that probably no conflict took place between Rājyavardhana and the Hūṇas, since the former was suddenly called back to the capital on account of the illness of his father (*Classical Age*, p. 98). We would, however, like to draw the attention of that learned scholar to a significant passage in the *Harshacharita* which specially mentions that Rājyavardhana returned to the capital with "long white bandages, bound about arrow-wounds received in battle while conquering the Hūṇas" (*H. C.*, p. 165). It should also be noted here that in case Rājya would not have been successful in repulsing the attacks of the Hūṇas quite effectively during that expedition, his blood-thirsty barbarous enemies would not have missed the opportunity of striking at the root of the Sthāneśvara Kingdom, when, only a short time later, it was threatened by the kings of Mālava and Gauḍa.

But the stars were against the royal house of Sthāneśvara. Soon one day Harsha saw Kuntala, the chief officer of cavalry and a favourite of Rājya, enter his room with a heavy face and worried looks. His face was betraying the tragedy

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1. *H. C.*, p. 176.
2. Bāṇa does not say what became of the "wicked king of Mālava" himself, whether he escaped or was killed. But on the information supplied by the Madhuban and Banskhera Plates of Harsha it is unanimously believed that the king of Mālava referred to in the *Harshacharita* is Devagupta of the above epigraphs and that he was slain in the battle by Rājyavardhana (राजानो युधि दुष्टवाजिन इव श्रीदेवगुप्तादयः कृत्वा येन कशाप्रहारविमुखाः सर्वे समं संयताः । *E.I.*, i, p. 72; *ibid.*, iv, p. 210. See also Bühler, *E.I.*, i., p. 70; Muller, *I.A.*, xiv, p. 233; Hall, *Vāsavadattā*, p. 52; Vaidya, *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, i, p. 35; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 53; Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, pp. 513ff; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 74). Havell, however, surprisingly states that the king of Mālava was "probably a Hun" (*Aryan Rule in India*, p. 189) while Ganguly identifies him with Buddharāja of the Kalachuri family (*J. B. O.R.S.*, xix, pp. 406-407; *I.H.Q.*, 1936, p. 461). Both the suggestions are difficult to believe.

   Bühler identifies the king with Devagupta but states that "the word Mālava need not refer here or in other passages of the *Śrīharshacharita* to the Mālava in Central India. There was another Mālava in the Punjab, much nearer to Thanesar, which may be meant" (*E.I.*, i., p. 70). There is no Mālava in the Punjab at all. There is, however, a Malwa in the Fatehpur district on the Ganges but we do not know if it was ever the capital of a state.

but he had not the words to reveal it. At last with a heavy tone he whispered the doleful news that Rājyavardhana, "though he had routed the Mālwa army with ridiculous ease, had been allured to confidence by false civilities on the part of the king of Gauḍa, and then, weaponless, confiding and alone, despatched in his own quarters."[1] Bāṇa does not mention who this king of Gauḍa was. But here Hsuan Chuang completes the narrative by naming the murderer of Rājya as "Śaśāṅka, the wicked king of Karṇasuvarṇa".[2] The real motive of this murder, however, seems to have been inspired by the "Machiavellian political maxim" that "if a frontier country has a virtuous ruler, this is the unhappiness of the mother kingdom."[3]

The story of the murder of Rājyavardhana by Śaśāṅka in his camp is also confirmed by the epigraphs of Harsha, for they state that Rājyavardhana "in consequence of his adherence to his promise gave up his life in the mansion of his foe."[4] This important epigraphic information does not lack confirmation, for Śaṅkara, the commentator on the *Harshacharita*, also informs us that Śaśāṅka threw Rājya off his guard by enticing him through a spy by the offer of marrying his daughter to him as a token of submission and friendship.[5] It is quite probable that, after the defeat of the Mālava king or during a period of truce, Śaśāṅka offered the hand of his daughter in marriage to Rājya, but Bāṇa avoided giving full details of this incident lest it may tarnish the reputation of Rājya. Perhaps inspired by this incident Bāṇa makes Skandagupta, a trusted officer of Harsha, enumerate a number of political murders brought about by taking advantage of the inadvertence on the

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1. *H. C.*, p. 178.
2. Watters, i, p. 343; *Life*, p. 85.
   Ganguly has tried to prove, though unconvincingly, that the murderer of Rājya was not Śaśāṅka (*I.H.Q.*, xxiii, p. 51 ff).
3. Beal, i, p. 210.
4. Madhuban Plate Inscription, *E.I.*, vii, p.159; Banskhera Plate Inscription, *E. I.*, iv, p. 210.
5. तथाहि तेन शशांकेन विश्वासार्थं दूतमुखेन कन्याप्रदानमुक्त्वा प्रलोभितो राज्यवर्धनः स्वगेहे सानुचरो भुंजान एव छद्मना व्यापादितः ॥

—Text, p. 175 (commentary .)

part of murdered kings. Here he also makes Skandagupta emphasise "the blunders of heedless men arising from women."[1] Skanda perhaps drew the attention of Harsha to these facts as he knew that Rājya's death was caused by his heedless action concerning some woman. Majumdar and some other scholars believe that Rājya was "defeated in a fair fight" and that it was not possible for him to have gone to his enemy's camp unarmed.[2] To refute this suggestion, we may refer to a passage in the *Harshacharita* where Harsha declared that it was Gauḍa king alone, a designer of black courses, who could lay low such a king with past records of undissembling heroism to his credit, when he was unarmed.[3] Mitra thinks that Rājya died in the battlefield while fighting against Śaśāṅka.[4] Banerji, too, believed that Rājyavardhana "himself was killed in a duel in the camp of the king of Gauḍa".[5] But in face of so many unimpeachable contemporary authorities we cannot believe in his suggestion. Anyhow, for sometime Kānyakubja passed into the hands of the enemies of Sthāneśvara and threatening clouds were enveloping it from all sides; and it reflects no small credit upon the youthful emperor Harsha that he bravely faced the perils and almost single-handed fought with the greatest potentates of the time.

On hearing this shocking news, seized with a paroxysm of wrath, Harsha's "aspect became terrific in the extreme" and "his wrathful curling lip seemed to drink the lives of all kings." He decided to annihilate the Gauḍas and took a terrible vow: "By the dust of my honoured lord's feet I swear that, unless in a limited number of days I clear the earth of

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[1] *H. C.*, pp. 192-94.

[2] *History of Bengal*, i, p. 71 ff; R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa*, i, p. 126; R.P. Chanda, *Gauḍarājamālā*, p. 8ff.

[3] *H.C.*, p. 179.

अवादीच्च गौडाधिपाधममपहाय कस्तादृशं महापुरुषं तत्क्षण एव निर्व्याजभुजवीर्यनिर्जित-समस्तराजकं मुक्तशस्त्रं कलशयोनिमिव कृष्णवर्त्मप्रसूतिरीदृशेन सर्ववीरलोकविगर्हितेन मृत्युना शमयेदेवमार्यम् ।

—Text, p. 187.

[4] Opinion quoted by Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 19, n.1.

[5] *History of Orissa*, i, p. 126.

Gauḍas, and make it resound with fetters on the feet of all kings who are excited to insolence by the elasticity of their bows, then will I hurl my sinful self, like a moth, into an oil-fed flame."[1] But his commander-in-chief, Siṁhanāda, added : "Think not of the Gauḍa king alone ; so deal that for future no other follow his example."[2] And then the marching drums sounded.

In the meantime, Siṁhanāda, seeing the royal throne vacant, for Rājya, young as he was, had left no issue and probably he was not even married, appealed to him to assume sovereignty[3] : "Now that the king has assumed his godhead and Rājyavardhana has lost his life by the sting of the vile Gauḍa serpent, you are, in the cataclysm which has come to pass, the only Śesha left to support the earth. Comfort your unprotected people. Like the autumn sun, set your forehead-burning footsteps upon the heads of kings."[4] Although Harsha was at first reluctant to wear the crown at that critical moment, it appears from the *Harshacharita* that he subsequently yielded to the pressure brought to bear upon him by the courtiers and high-placed government officials in the interest of the administration of the State. It is, of course, a fact that unless he was consecrated even nominally he would not be recognised as ruler of the kingdom or exercise his sovereign sway.

APPENDIX

Kumāragupta, Mādhavagupta and Devagupta

The two young princes, Kumāra and Mādhava, who had come to stay at the royal court at Sthāneśvara as friends of Rājya and Harsha, undoubtedly belonged to one of the two royal houses of Mālava. Again, there is a passage in the *Harshacharita* which refers to the "wicked king of Mālava" who was responsible for the death of Grahavarman Maukhari, but Bāṇa is altogether silent as regards his name (*H.C.*, p. 173). What we actually miss in that passage has undoubtedly been supplied by the Madhuban and Banskhera plates which clearly mention that Rājya defeated Devagupta (*E.I.*, vii, p.159; iv, p. 208-11). It is not at all improbable that the wicked king of Mālava referred to by Bāṇa was Devagupta against whom military action was undertaken for the first time by Rājya soon after the death of his father. That Devagupta was the ruler of Mālava has been suggested also by a passage in the *Harshacharita* which specifically mentions the defeat and death of the king of Mālava at the hands of Rājya when he invaded the kingdom of Kānyakubja to avenge the death of his brother-in-law, Grahavarman. Thus, if Devagupta, Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta belonged to the royal house of Mālava, the question that arises is : what was the relation of the former with the other two ? Since Hsuan Chuang has mentioned Śīlāditya as the contemporary ruler of Mo-la-po or Western Mālava it stands to reason that the three Mālava princes mentioned above belonged to the royal house of Eastern Mālava. Śīlāditya of Mo-la-po might have been a successor of Yaśodharman Vishṇuvardhana but we have no definite information as regards the exact relation of the two. That Mo-la-po stands for Western Mālava is beyond cavil. There is also no cogent reason to disbelieve the existence of another kingdom of Mālava ruled over by the members of a different royal family during the period in question. It can certainly be the eastern part of Mālava of which the aforesaid Devagupta was the ruler. The fact that eastern and western Mālava had separate existence, were known by different names, and were ruled over independently by different ruling families in different periods of their earlier history, is evident from the inscriptions of the pre-Gupta period. It is true that under the imperial Guptas the two units had to become one, for administrative purposes, but when the Gupta imperialism collapsed, the two Mālavas again became separate and functioned as different states under different ruling families. While Devagupta was the ruler of Eastern Mālava, as it appears from the contemporary records, the Chinese traveller, Hsuan Chuang, brings to our notice that Mo-la-po or Western Mālava was ruled over by Śīlāditya a few decades before he visited that kingdom. We can, therefore, reasonably connect Kumāra and Mādhava with Devagupta since all of them belonged to the Gupta royal family of Mālava as their name suggests, and that too of Eastern Mālava. It is needless to mention here that a third Mālava Kingdom is so far unknown to history.

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[1] *H. C.*, p. 187.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

[3] Cf. Vaidya, *H.M.H.I.*, i, p. 7.

Havell, however, states that "it may be presumed that Rājyavardhana's sons were for some reason unfitted to assume royal responsibilities" (*Aryan Rule in India*, p. 189).

[4] *H.C.*, p. 185-86.

If we admit that Devagupta was the eldest of the three brothers he becomes *ipso facto* son of Mahāsenagupta, just as Mādhavagupta has been represented to be so in the Aphsad Inscription (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 202 ff). It may be noted here that we can connect Devagupta with Mahāsenagupta only with the help of Mādhavagupta, and that there is no other information whatsoever whereby we can establish his relationship with Mahāsenagupta. Since Mahāsenagupta's sister Mahāsenaguptā (admitting that in the Mālava royal family brothers and sisters were given almost identical names) was married to King Ādityavardhana, father of Prabhākaravardhana, Devagupta, Kumāra, and Mādhava ordinarily should become almost of the same age as Prabhākara, and not of his sons, Rājya and Harsha. If king Mahāsenagupta was of the same age or a little younger than Ādityavardhana, we wonder, how his youngest son, Mādhava, instead of being a younger contemporary of Prabhākara, is of the same age as that of his youngest son. This anomaly can be explained, if we admit, that Devagupta was a younger cousin brother of Mahāsenagupta and was an aspirant for the throne of Eastern Mālava, and that Kumāra and Mādhava were the sons of Mahāsenagupta, born in the later period of his life probably by one of his junior queens.

It is possible that after seeing the attitude of Devagupta or coming to know of his intention to usurp the throne in the event of his own death, and also in view of the fact that both Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta were of a very tender age, Mahāsenagupta, being anxious for their personal safety, sent them away to the royal court at Sthāneśvara so that Kumāragupta might rule after him as the protege of the Pushpabhūtis and thus there be no break in his line of succession. Since Prabhākaravardhana, as it appears, was of the same opinion as

Mahāsenagupta, as his action suggests, Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta, the two Mālava princes, who were in their teens, had to go to Sthāneśvara in accordance with the wishes of their father and thus became intimate and loyal friends of Rājya and Harsha, as the later events in the history of the Pushpabhūtis show.

What appears from the subsequent history of eastern Mālava is that Mahāsenagupta died shortly before the death of Prabhākaravardhana and Devagupta usurped the throne. Since Prabhākaravardhana was unable to take any action in the Mālava affairs because of his old age and illness which culminated later into his death and more particularly because his army had been sent to the north-west under the command of Rājya to fight with the Hūṇas, Devagupta had no difficulty in fulfilling his cherished desire of wearing the crown of Mālava and rule there as its independent king.

CHAPTER II

THE PUSHPABHŪTIS OF STHĀNEŚVARA–II

(The Reign of Harshavardhana–I)

Accession of Harsha.

After the murder of Rājyavardhana it was only natural that Harsha should ascend the throne. Bāṇa makes no special mention of Harsha's accession; and there was obviously no reason for doing so specially when his elder brother was unmarried at the time of his death. But Hsuan Chuang informs us that after the death of Rājyavardhana, the country became desolate. With the great minister Po-ni at their head, the people wished to install Harsha on the throne. Harsha was, however, reluctant to crown himself but he agreed to do so, if Avalokiteśvara, whose shrine was situated in the precincts of Kānyakubja, would advise him to that effect.[1] The pilgrim informs us further that the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara asked him to be the ruler but not to ascend the 'lion throne' (*siṁhāsana*) and not to call himself '*Mahārāja*'. Having received that direction from the aforesaid deity, Harsha took the vow of carrying it out; and, as the first step towards its fulfilment, he styled himself *Śīlāditya*, and further adopted the title *Rājaputra* which he was also directed to assume.[2] It should, however, be noted that Hsuan Chuang's statement relates to the city of Kānyakubja and not to Sthāneśvara. It

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1. Watters, i, p.343.
2. *Ibid.*; Beal, i, p. 212.

The title Śīlāditya was not uncommonly assumed by, or given to, the rulers of that period. Hsuan Chuang gives the title principally to Harsha, but he himself mentions other rulers who also bore it. The assumption, now prevalent, that Śīlāditya was an official title of Harsha, is entirely due to a false notion created by the Chinese pilgrim's statement. If it had been his official title, it is almost inconceivable that there should be no mention of it either in Bāṇa's *Harshacharita* or in the epigraphs of Harsha. There is no direct evidence for it, either historical or traditional. All that Hsuan Chuang's use of the title shows is that in the Buddhist community Harsha was known by that title.

is indeed surprising that he has not said anything about Harsha or his family in connection with the latter place which he also visited. Conversely, Bāṇa makes no reference to Kānyakubja in connection with the accession of Harsha. What actually is suggested by the *Harshacharita* is that the consecration of the prince took place at Sthāneśvara but without any pomp or splendour before he left the capital for Kānyakubja at the head of an army to avenge the murder of his elder brother. The fact of his consecration at Sthāneśvara may be proved by certain incidental references to it, which have been found in their proper setting in the aforesaid work. For instance, he not only approved the request of his commander-in-chief to crown himself before marching against his enemies as a sound piece of advice which should be "acted upon" but also "complied with all the forms of royalty" and further, ceremonially "bathed in golden and silver vessels".[1] Since there is no glowing account of his consecration ceremony in the *Harshacharita*, our presumption is that it was only nominal, as it should be, in view of the successive calamities that befell on the royal house of the Pushpabhūtis. Unless Harsha had been crowned his orders were not likely to be carried out by the feudatories or even by the army; and it is for this reason that Harsha asked his commander-in-chief to issue a royal order to the effect that if any feudatory was not prepared to recognise him as a ruler of the land he should prepare himself for the consequences.[1] These facts which have come to be stated by Bāṇa quite incidentally go a great way to show that when Harsha reached Kānyakubja he was already a crowned king.

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[1] *H. C.*, pp. 186, 194, 197.

As for a further piece of evidence pointing to the consecration of Harsha at Sthāneśvara, prior to his departure for Kānyakubja, we may cite here the story of an omen which is not only relevant but highly significant in the present context. From the narrative of Bāṇa it appears that while Harsha was about to undertake his expedition against his enemies from the outskirts of the city of Sthāneśvara where a structure was specially raised for him for the commencement of his journey the village notary came "with his whole retinue of clerks" to pay respects to their newly crowned king. What actually transpired during their meeting with Harsha has been graphically described by Bāṇa in the following words : " 'Let his majesty, whose edicts are never void, even now bestow upon us his commands for the day',so presented a newly-made golden seal with a bull for its emblem. The king took it. As soon, however, as a ball of earth was produced, the seal slipped from the king's hand and fell face downwards upon the ground, and the lines of the letters were distinctly marked upon the nearly dry mud and soft earth of the Sarasvatī's bank. Apprehensive of an evil omen, the courtiers were depressed, but the king thought in his heart: 'The minds of the dull are indeed blind to reality. The omen signifies that the earth shall be stamped with the single seal of my sole command: but the rustics interpret otherwise'. Having thus mentally welcomed the omen, he bestowed upon the Brahmanas a hundred villages delimited by a thousand ploughs.

A relevant question that may be raised here is : why was Harsha reluctant to ascend the throne, as stated by Hsuan Chuang ? It has been discussed at some length by several historians and it is, therefore, necessary to set forth their views here before we give our own opinion on the same. Smith holds the view that "some unknown obstacle stood in the way of Harsha's accession and compelled him to rely for his title to the crown upon election by the nobles rather than upon

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That day he spent in the same place, and when night arrived, complimented all the kings and retired to rest" (*H. C.*, p. 198-99).

The incident clearly suggests that Harsha was not merely consecrated but also, according to the royal practice of the time, approved of the design of the seal which was to be used during his reign. The seal, that was approved, had the figure of a bull embossed on it, as stated by Bāṇa, has been corroborated by actual specimens discovered so far. The Sonpat and the Nalanda Seals have the emblem of a recumbent bull embossed above the inscription inscribed on them (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 231 ff; *E.I.*, xxi, p. 74ff; see also the seal attached to the Banskhera Copper Plate Grant, *E.I.*, iv, p.210). If he had not assumed the sovereignty of his kingdom, the question of the royal seal would not have arisen. To what extent the work of Bāṇa is true to actual history even in details, has been amply proved by archaeological evidence. We are, therefore, led to believe that Harsha's consecration did take place at Sthāneśvara, though shorn of all pomp and splendour worthy of the occasion.

[1] *H. C.*, p. 187-88.

his hereditary claims".[1] He is further of the opinion that after the murder of Rājyavardhana the country suffered from "disorders and anarchy" and this "forced the councillors of state"..."acting on the advice of Bhaṇḍi.........to invite Harsha to undertake the responsibilities of the royal office".[2] Panikkar suggests that Harsha feared the responsibility of kingship in view of the fact that the feudatories were "refractory and rebellious" and that Rājya probably had left a male issue[3] (!). Jharkhandi believes that Harsha was reluctant to be a crowned king because he was "only 15 years of age" and was also "unmarried" when the death of Rājyavardhana took place. According to him, therefore, the "reluctance on the part of Harsha was probably nothing but a legal incompetency, without remedying which he could not raise himself to the imperial dignity." The legal incompetence according to him is that the *Rājyābhisheka* ceremony could not be performed in the case of Harsha unless and until he had a *Mahishī* (chief queen) and without that ceremony again it would not be possible for him to assume sovereignty.[4]

The fallacies to be noted in the arguments of Smith are really three. They may be briefly stated as follows: (1) As stated above by us, Hsuan Chuang has not said anything with regard to Harsha's accession when he visited Sthāneśvara. He, however, in his description of the city of Kānyakubja, brings to our notice that Harsha was reluctant to ascend the throne even though he was persuaded by the councillors and also by one Po-ni who appears to have been senior to all of them. But the request had no effect on Harsha for he, as stated by the Chinese pilgrim, decided to consult the god Avalokiteśvara on this point. The directive which he had from the deity was that he must not sit on the 'lion-throne' and must not also use the title '*Mahārāja*'. Since the temple of Avalokiteśvara was situated on the bank of the Ganges within the limits of the city of Kānyakubja, the only conclusion that a historian is likely to draw is that Harsha was not in favour of ascending the throne of the kingdom of Kānyakubja, since it belonged to the Maukharis and of which his sister Rājyaśrī was legally the inheritor after the murder of her husband. The Buddhist oracle, as alleged, thus strongly supported Harsha in respect of his reluctance to ascend the throne of Kānyakubja. Smith should have clearly specified as to whether the reluctance on the part of Harsha was with reference to the throne of Sthāneśvara or that of Kānyakubja. It is apparent that he has confused the two issues and has taken them to be one and the same which, from the standpoint of historical criticism, is not justifiable. (2) The councillor Po-ni, who was at the head of the administration of the kingdom of Kānyakubja, by virtue, perhaps, of being its chief-minister, and who offered the empty throne of Kānyakubja to Harsha, has been identified by Smith with prince Bhaṇḍi, a near relation and friend of Harsha. How could Bhaṇḍi be connected with the kingdom of Kānyakubja and what authority had he to offer the same to Harsha as the seniormost councillor of the Maukhari kingdom–passes our comprehension. We are strongly of the opinion that Po-ni and Bhaṇḍi are different persons, the former connected with the general administration of the kingdom of Kānyakubja and the latter probably with the military administration of the Sthāneśvara kingdom after the death of Prabhākaravardhana. There is thus no justification for establishing the identity of Bhaṇḍi with Po-ni as has been done by that learned historian. Phonetically, again, the Chinese form Po-ni cannot be equivalent to the Sanskrit form Bhaṇḍi. It is for this reason that some scholars consider it to be equivalent to the Sanskrit form 'Bani' but have completely overlooked the fact that it is a feminine name, and, as such, cannot be assumed by the seniormost councillor of the kingdom of Kānyakubja who was obviously a male.[1] (3) Smith is equally wrong when he thinks that it was Bhaṇḍi who insisted upon Harsha to wear the crown after receiving the news of the murder of Rājyavardhana. That learned scholar is, therefore, of the opinion that the consecration of Harsha took place at Sthāneśvara at the insistence of Bhaṇḍi, whereas from the *Harshacharita* we learn that it was Siṁhanāda, the commander-in-chief of the army, who fervently requested him to ascend the throne for the safety of his ancestral kingdom.[1] We learn from the very same source that Bhaṇḍi was in Kānyakubja or was on his way from that city to Sthāneśvara when the consecration of Harsha took place in his own capital.[2] Thus the question of Bhaṇḍi's exerting pressure on Harsha for the assumption of sovereignty of his paternal kingdom does not arise. We, however, agree with Smith that the consecration of Harsha took place at Sthāneśvara but differ from him when he says that it was Bhaṇḍi who insisted upon Harsha to wear the crown since it is clearly stated by Bāṇa that the commander-in-chief Siṁhanāda earnestly entreated his master to assume the reigns of the government in the interest of the kingdom. We also differ from him in respect of his statement that "some unknown obstacle stood in the way of Harsha's accession and compelled him to rely for his title to the crown upon election by the nobles rather than upon his hereditary claims", since after the death of Prabhākaravardhana and Rājyavardhana there was no other claimant to the throne of Sthāneśvara. After the murder of Rājyavardhana there were only two possibilities, one of which was to help Harsha to ascend the throne and the other, to keep the throne vacant for all time to come. The latter, certainly, could not have been considered to be a judicious course under the circumstances by the responsible officers of the State or even by the loyal feudatories. The question of "election", and not of nomination or selection, in the matter of accession, is an absurdity and is so far unknown in the history of any Hindu kingdom.

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[1] *Early History of India, p.* 351.

[2] *Ibid., p.* 350.

[3] *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj, p.* 15.

[4] *I. H. Q.*, 1936, p. 142 ff.

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[1] See Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 17, n. 1.

We think that Po-ni is the Chinese translation of some Indian name and not its phonetic equivalent.

Panikkar's view is also hardly convincing. We have no evidence of Harsha's feudatories being "refractory and rebel-

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1. *H. C.*, p. 182-86.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

lious". On the other hand, we have the evidence of Bāṇa that he was a popular prince and at the time he was preparing to leave Sthāneśvara for Kānyakubja "the front of the king's residence became full of chieftains from every side".[1] In case the neighbouring vassal chiefs would have been "rebellious", Harsha could not have left his capital to punish the murderers of his brother and brother-in-law so conveniently, and so soon, as related in the *Harshacharita*; nor can we think that Harsha was afraid of the responsibilities of kingship to which he had accustomed himself from his early youth. The *Harshacharita* explicitly mentions that when Rājyavardhana left the capital for Kānyakubja, he entrusted Harsha with the discharge of royal duties. Of Rājyavardhana leaving a male issue, there can be no question, since he was not even married.

The arguments of Jharkhandi are no doubt interesting but highly fallacious. He has taken his stand more on the theoretical aspect of coronation rather than on what was actually in practice as borne out by history. We need not go very far in search for a suitable example to contradict the arguments of that learned scholar. Rājyavardhana was only 18 years of age at the time of his father's death and upto that time he was unmarried. Before he left for Kānyakubja, he was consecrated, although we admit that it must have been of a very nominal kind. Since he was consecrated, in the Madhuban and Banskhera plates and the Sonpat and Nalanda seals of Harsha, he has been styled *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja.*[2] If an unmarried prince of 18 years of age could be consecrated, whatever might be the reason, in violation of the *śāstric* injunctions, what legal incompetence was there for his younger brother to be consecrated in the very same manner, indeed, passes our comprehension. It may be pointed out further that, according to the orthodox Buddhist tradition, Emperor Chandragupta Maurya was consecrated before he was married to his maternal uncle's daughter who became his *agramahishī* (Chief Queen). As for a further illustration, it

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1. *H. C.*, p. 202.
2. *E. I.*, i, p. 72 ff; *ibid.*, iv, p. 210; *C. I. I*, iii, p. 231 ff; *E. I.*, xxi, p. 74 ff.

may be pointed out here that Aśoka's first marriage with Devī was of the morganatic type, and, as such, she was disqualified to be the Chief Queen. Aśoka's first consecration took place after the fatricidal war, although it was of a nominal kind as we can reasonably expect. From the joint testimony of his inscriptions and the Buddhist chronicles, it appears that he was twice consecrated and the interval between the two consecration ceremonies was four years. Aśoka married Asandhimitrā, who was his Chief Queen, a few years after his second coronation, if the Theravāda tradition is to be believed. Now the question that arises is: how was it possible for him to ascend the throne and get himself consecrated when his first wife was suffering from a legal disqualification according to the *śāstras* and was unable to assume the dignity of the chief-queen, and the one who actually stepped in that place was married to him after his second coronation ? It is because of these concrete historical facts that we are led to believe that the *śāstric* injunctions relating to a coronation ceremony were purely of a theoretical nature and were liable to violation, if circumstances compelled an heir-apparent to do so. The arguments of Jharkhandi are, therefore, not appropriate to the context.

With regard to the historical value of the oracle referred to by Hsuan Chuang in his itinerary, as mentioned above, we would like to draw the attention of scholars to two significant facts. Hsuan Chuang has specifically mentioned that Harsha took the vow of neither ascending the throne nor bear the title '*Mahārāja*'. It is interesting to note that his promises in those two respects, if there be any truth in the story, stand contradicted by literary and epigraphic evidence. Thus, while on the one hand, Bāṇa informs us that the Goddess of Royal prosperity (*Rājyalakshmī*) "took him in her arms and forced him, however, reluctant, to mount the throne", which is undoubtedly the poetic way of saying that he ascended the throne as it fell vacant after the murder of his elder brother Rājyavardhana, even the facsimile of Harsha's signature as inscribed on the Banskhera Plate, shows, on the other hand, that he bore the imperialistic title "*Mahārājādhirāja*" and not simply "*Mahārāja*".[1] In fact, in all the inscriptions of Harsha, without any exception, he has been styled "*Paramabhaṭṭāraka*" and "*Mahārājādhirāja*" which were borne by his royal father and deceased elder brother.[2] Little credence, therefore, can be placed on the story of that oracle though it is quite possible that he refused to sit on the throne of Kānyakubja which became vacant after the murder of Grahavarman, as a usurper, by bearing the title '*Mahārāja*'. What was exactly the nature of his political relation with the Maukhari kingdom after the death of Grahavarman we have discussed elsewhere in detail.

March against Kānyakubja

After assuming the reigns of government, Harsha prepared himself with all the resources at his command to march towards Kānyakubja to avenge the dastardly murder of his beloved brother and rescue his sister from fetters. He ordered Avanti, his Minister for Peace and War, to "let all kings prepare their hands to give tribute, or grasp swords; to seize the realms of space or chowries ; let them bend their heads, or their bows, grace their ears with my commands, or their bowstrings, crown their heads with the dust of my feet, or with helmets."[3] And then he instructed the Commander of his Elephant Troops, Skandagupta, to call in the elephant herds out at pasture and gave command for a world-wide conquest.[4]

Then, without delaying any further, he marched on an auspicious day "for the subjugation of all the four quarters" after worshipping the tutelary deity of the family *Nīlalohita* (Rudra Śiva).[5] Halting on the bank of the river Sarasvatī for a short while where a *skandhāvāra* had been specially erected for him for arranging the different sections of the army before the commencement of the expedition, which was

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1. *H. C.*, p. 57; *E. I.*, iv, p. 210 ff.
2. Cf. *E. I.*, i, p. 72 ff; *ibid.*, iv, p. 210; *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 231 ff; *E.I.*, xxi, p. 74 ff.
3. *H. C.*, p. 187–188.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 191 and 194.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

not possible inside the capital, he was again on the march.[1] As the ruler of the land, it was here that he granted a hundred villages to the Brahmins who had gone there to bless him for the success of his military undertakings. The land grants made by him for the first time must have been legalised by issuing royal charters bearing the impression of the king's seal which was very probably used for the first time on that occasion.[2]

On the way he was met by Haṁsavega who was a "confidential messenger" of the heir-apparent of Prāgjyotisha (Assam), Bhāskaravarman.[3] He had come from him with

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[1] *H. C.*, p. 198.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 198-99.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 211.

देव ! प्राग्ज्योतिषेश्वरेण कुमारेण प्रहितो हंसवेगनामा दूतोऽन्तरंगस्तोरणमध्यास्ते ।

—Text, p. 214.

Majumdar wants us to believe that Kumāra was the other name of King Bhāskaravarman and that he has actually been referred to in the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa by that name but "the translators have missed it" (*Classical Age*, p. 99, n. 5). That learned scholar has apparently overlooked the fact that the apprehension used by Bāṇa is प्राग्ज्योतिषेश्वरेण कुमारेण and not प्राग्ज्योतिषस्याधिपेण or प्राग्ज्योतिषस्याधिपतिना or प्राग्ज्योतिषराजेन (or महाराजेन) कुमारेण or such other significant epithets. Thus the expression used by him cannot but mean the "prince of Prāgjyotiṣa." Similarly, elsewhere in referring to the same prince, Bāṇa informs us specifically that he was known by two different names, viz., Bhāskaradyuti and Bhāskaravarman, who, as a prince, was equal to Bhīshma in noble qualities (*H.C.*, p. 217; तस्य च सुगृहीतनाम्नो देवस्य देव्यां श्यामादेव्यां भास्करद्युतिर्भास्करवर्मापरनामा तनयः शन्तनोर्भागीरथ्यां भीष्म इव कुमारः– Text, p. 220). The only conjecture that we can possibly entertain is that at the time when the envoy came to meet the king of Sthāneśvara, Bhāskaravarman was unmarried. Since Bāṇa has mentioned his real name and *alias*, viz., Bhāskaradyuti and Bhāskaravarman (अपरनामा), we do not think that it should create any doubt in our minds as regards the name Kumāra being the other *alias* of that prince. It is true that Hsuan Chuang has referred to him as Kumāra (Watters, i, p. 348)-very probably because of the fact that he was more popularly known as Kumāra in the camp of Harsha. At any rate, whether Kumāra was an *alias* of Bhāskaravarman or not, the translators of *Harshacharita* (Cowell and Thomas) have correctly translated the word Kumāra in innumerable costly presents to seek an "imperishable alliance" with the king of Sthāneśvara since the safety of his kingdom was perhaps threatened by the growing power of the Gauḍas.[1] As the alliance was against a powerful common enemy, Harsha readily accepted it for he thought, as we presume, that they would then jointly be able to press him hard from both the sides.

After despatching the envoy with presents and an "undying alliance" in return, he continued his "advance by ceaseless marches against the foe until one day he heard from a letter carrier that Bhaṇḍi had arrived with the Mālava king's whole force, conquered by the might of Rājyavardhana's arm and was encamped quite near."[2] It appears from the narrative of *Harshacharita* that Rājyavardhana had sent back Bhaṇḍi along with a part of his army to Sthāneśvara after defeating and killing Devagupta and himself had proceeded towards Kānyakubja to rescue his sister Rājyaśrī. Perhaps till then he had no information that Śaśāṅka was in occupation of the capital of the Maukharis and, therefore, he had sent away Bhaṇḍi instead of keeping him by his side for another battle.[3] When Bhaṇḍi came to know that Harsha was encamping nearby, he took the earliest opportunity of meeting him for reporting the death of king Rājyavardhana under tragic

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the sense of heir-apparent and prince as it appears from the passage where that name occurs.

[1] *H. C.*, pp. 211-18; cf. Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 71, n. 2.

It is highly improbable that the messenger of Bhāskaravarman came to meet Harsha. He must have commenced his journey long before Harsha came to the throne. The tributes sent from Assam were meant either for Prabhākaravardhana or his successor Rājyavardhana, more probably the former, if we take the distance to be covered by the messenger into consideration.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 215-23.

[3] Bāṇa has made no reference to Śaśāṅka as to what he did after the death of Devagupta; but it appears clearly from the story as told by him elsewhere, that Kānyakubja was seized by him (*H. C.*, p. 250) and that after the murder of Rājyavardhana he had to take to flight perhaps in view of the dire consequence which he might have to suffer at the hands of Harsha who was rapidly approaching towards the Maukhari capital to avenge the death of his elder brother.

circumstances. In the interview that took place in the camp of Harsha, Bhaṇḍi narrated everything about the death of Rājyavardhana about which his personal knowledge was lacking.[1] What he reported has been adequately expressed by Bāṇa in the following manner: "Your majesty, I learnt from common talk that after his majesty Rājyavardhana was taken to paradise and Kānyakubja was seized by the man named Gupta, queen Rājyaśrī burst from her confinement, and with her train entered the Vindhyā forest. But not to this day have the numerous searchers sent after her returned."[2]

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[1] Bühler surprisingly states that "Bhaṇḍin, who had accompanied Rājyavardhana, brought the booty from Mālava to Harsha when the latter had reached the territory of Kumāra-Bhāskaravarman on his expedition of revenge against the king of Gauḍa" (*E.I.*, i, p. 70). So far our knowledge from the available sources goes, Harsha never visited the territory of the king of Kāmarupa.

[2] *H.C.*, p. 224.

देव, देवभूयं गते देवे राज्यवर्धने गुप्तनाम्ना च गृहीते कुशस्थले देवी राज्यश्रीः परिभ्रश्य बन्धनाद्विन्ध्याटवीं सपरिवारा प्रविष्टेति लोकतो वार्तामश्रृणवम् । अन्वेष्टारस्तु तां प्रति प्रभूताः प्रहिता जना नाद्यापि निवर्तन्ते ।

—Text, p. 226.

See also *H.C.*, pp. 250-51.

भुक्तवांश्च बन्धनात्प्रभृति विस्तरतः स्वसुः कान्यकुब्जाद्गौडसंभ्रमं गुप्तितो गुप्तनाम्ना कुलपुत्रेण निष्कासनं......।

—Text, p. 249.

The identity of the man named Gupta who seized the city of Kānyakubja after the murder of Rājyavardhana, as stated by Bāṇa, has become a subject of controversy. Vaidya thinks that "a Gupta chief (?) who was in charge of the city of Kanauj quietly released Rājyaśrī from confinement and sent her away, in order probably *to divert the attention of Bhaṇḍi*" (*H. M. H. I.*, i, p. 5). Basak is of opinion that he was "a partisan of the Mālava or the Gauḍa King" or "a friend of Maukhari family" (*Hist. of N.E. India*, p. 145). Following Aravamuthan, Pires suggests that he was "an underling of the Gupta" *(Maukharis*, p. 110, n. 3). Mookerji believes that "the Gupta who is stated in the *Harshacharita* to have seized Kanauj might have been Śaśāṅka himself, and Rājyaśrī's escape from her prison might have been under his orders as inferred by Messrs. R. D. Banerji and R. Chanda (See R.D. Banerji's *History of Bengal* in Bengali, 2nd Ed., p. 106)" (*Harsha*, p. 71, n. 1). The theory of Vaidya appears to make Gupta a friend or ally of the deceased Devagupta, who released Rājyaśrī, just to divert the attention of Bhaṇḍi so that he may not come to Kānyakubja with the army in the interest of Rājyaśrī, is by no means convincing. Since Basak is uncertain as to whether Gupta was an ally or enemy of Devagupta, we need not take seriously his opinion into consideration. The remark of Aravamuthan as cited by Pires that Gupta was "an underling of the Gupta" is clearly ambiguous and, therefore, may be ruled out. The suggestion of Mookerji is also not at all convincing. The learned scholar has based his opinion on the fact that a manuscript of the *Harshacharita* mentions Śaśāṅka as *Narendragupta* (See *E.I.*, i, p. 70). Whether he was known by that name or not is not so very important for our purpose here. Bāṇa has referred to the man responsible for the release of Rājyaśrī as "a noble named Gupta" (*H.C.*, p. 251), who, as we have explained below, could not be Śaśāṅka or his ally. He was definitely some one friendly to the Maukhari royal house as is clearly apparent from the *Harshacharita.*

In our opinion this Gupta might have been a high-placed government official of the Maukharis or a friend and ally of Grahavarman, because he took possession of the city of Kānyakubja with the sole intention of giving protection to Rājyaśrī and perhaps also to other surviving members of the Maukhari royal family. His act was certainly a friendly one, since he set free Rājyaśrī from the prison and took possession of the city to avert a chaotic condition prevailing there. As Bāṇa has referred to, this noble hearted man only twice in his work, nothing more can be suggested about him for lack of adequate information; but it is certain that he was not Śaśāṅka himself, nor was he in any way favourably inclined towards Devagupta. We have been led to this conclusion, because in referring to him Bāṇa has used the word *Kulaputra* in apposition (गुप्तनाम्ना कुलपुत्रेण), so as to enable us to realise who he was. The word *Kulaputra,* as will be seen, has no special significance, unless it be that he was a Maukhari *Kulaputra.* But the use of the word *Kulaputra* in the text, with reference to Gupta and the magnanimity shown by him in releasing Rājyaśrī from prison make us strongly suspect that he was a scion of the Maukhari royal family, who was in no way hostile to the deceased Grahavarman Maukhari. Being a collateral, he might have been holding some responsible post in the government; and fearing that Rājyaśrī might fall in the hands of Śaśāṅka or carried away from Kānyakubja by some enemy of the Maukhari family and thereby court further trouble and disgrace, sent her away from Kānyakubja in the company of her handmaids to such a distant land as the Vindhya forests. If Gupta had not been a person of some consequence Baṇa would have referred to him as गुप्तनाम्नाजनेक कुलपुत्रेण and not as गुप्तनाम्ना कुलपुत्रेण. An ordinary man, however noble might be his birth, could not have taken such an action so swiftly and so adequately as required by circumstances, if he had not been an important political figure, at any rate, at the Maukhari court.

The news that Rājyaśrī had left for the Vindhyan forests worried Harsha and made him alter his plan.[1] The task of finding Rājyaśrī being more important, he left his army there and, taking Mādhavagupta and a few tributary kings with himself, he immediately rushed towards the Vindhyas to rescue his beloved sister. On reaching the Vindhyas he met Vyāghraketu, son of Śarabhaketu, a tributary chief, along with a young mountaineer and Nirghāta, nephew of Bhūkampa, a Vindhyan chief.[2] They took the king to the saint named Divākaramitra, a "boy-friend of the deceased Grahavarman," who had set up his hermitage in the Vindhyan forest.[3] Through the help of that saint he was able to discover his sister in the depths of the Vindhyan forests when she was just about to "enter the funeral pile," "surrounded by a troop of women."[4] Harsha felt extremely thankful to the mendicant and being very much overwhelmed by the kindness shown by him said "this body of mine is placed unreservedly at your disposal till death. You are now absolutely free to do with it what you please."[5] Harsha persuaded Rājyaśrī to abandon the idea of self-immolation to which she agreed but requested her brother to permit her to embrace asceticism and assume "red robe" which befitted her under the circumstances so tragic.[6] But the saint did not approve of her wishes and so in the end Harsha told him, "my sister, so young and so tired by adversity, must be cherished by me for a while even if it involves the neglect of my duties," and "when I have accomplished my design, she and I will assume the red garments together."[1] After recovering Rājyaśrī, Harsha, along with her, came back to his camp near the Ganges.[2]

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[1] It seems that Śaśāṅka had encamped on the outskirts of Kānyakubja on the Northern or Western side. Rājyavardhana, therefore, did not get any opportunity to get into the city and rescue his sister Rājyaśrī as he was treacherously murdered in the camp of the Gauḍa King outside the city before entering Kānyakubja. This may perhaps explain why Rājyaśrī sought shelter in the Vindhya forests instead of proceeding to Sthāneśvara for the same purpose.

[2] *H.C.*, pp. 230 and 232.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 249.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 254.

[6] *Ibid.*

As the *Harshacharita* comes to an abrupt end after the recovery of Rājyaśrī, we do not get any correct information about Harsha's campaign against Śaśāṅka, except that Bāṇa has alluded to "riders intently occupied in rehearsing the approaching Gauḍa war."[3] Probably Bhaṇḍi, who had been in charge of the expedition, proceeded against the Gauḍa king but seeing the large army of the Sthāneśvara monarch, Śaśāṅka too, must have thought it prudent to seek shelter elsewhere.[4] We are tempted to draw this conclusion from the fact that the Harsha-Bhāskaravarman pact had practically sandwiched him between Sthāneśvara and Kāmarupa. The Ganjam Copper-plate Inscription (G.E. 300), however, mentions him as *Mahārājādhirāja* Śaśāṅkarāja and records a grant of one of his feudatories ruling on the east coast.[5] The same epigraph also gives us the impression that he was ruling in full glory as late as 620 A.D.[6]

Kānyakubja thus once again regained its independence but without any one to guide its destiny at that critical period since Grahavarman had no issue, as we learn from the *Harshacharita*.[7] Thus there being no male descendant in the line of Avantivarman who was suitable enough to hold the reins of the government, the decision that was taken by the Prime Minister of that kingdom along with his cabinet colleagues was the most reasonable under the circumstances. It appears from the Chinese sources that the decision taken by them was that Rājyaśrī, though yet in her teens, should be placed on

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1. *H. C.*, pp. 257-58.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 258.

   The *Harshacharita* abruptly comes to an end at this point after narrating only the early career of Harsha.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 209.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 224.
5. *E.I.*, vi, p. 141.
6. The history of Śaśāṅka has been treated by us separately elsewhere.
7. *H.C.*, p. 254.

the vacant throne and that she would administer under the protection of her royal brother Harsha. From the Chinese sources it appears that the decision originally was to place Harshavardhana on the throne of Kānyakubja in the best interest of the state but since Harsha was reluctant to assume the sole sovereignty of that kingdom for a number of reasons, his sister, the only other lawful claimant to the throne, was chosen by them as their ruler.[1] It is more than evident from the same source that while Rājyaśrī was the *de jure* ruler of the kingdom of Kānyakubja she was actually helped in carrying out her royal duties by her brother very probably as the regent. The information supplied by Fang-Chih that both Harsha and Rājyaśrī used to sit together on the throne at Kānyakubja for conducting the administration of the state, is itself a pointer to the fact that Rājyaśrī was actually ruling with the assistance of her royal brother.[2] Whether the Maukhari kingdom had an independent existence after the death of Grahavarman or not is difficult to say since it was encompassed by the new conquests of Harshavardhana. Although the emperor himself assisted his sister in the discharge of her royal duties, the transfer of his capital from Sthāneśvara to Kānyakubja clearly suggests that the new Maukhari ruler was under his tutelage.[3]

Wars and Conquests

Harsha, having now amalgamated the resources of the two powerful States, began making preparations to bring the whole of India "under one umbrella." By this time he had oollected an army of 50,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 5,000 elephants.[1] But unfortunately we do not have the details of his campaigns, for Bāṇa, the chief source of our narrative so far, is completely silent about it. In fact, as already stated above, he even does not tell us as to what he did to punish the murderer of his brother. In this matter Hsuan Chuang, however, has come to our rescue and supplied us some information, though meagre, about the conquests of Harsha. According to him "as soon as Śīlāditya became ruler he got together a great army, and set out to avenge his brother's murder and to reduce the neighbouring countries to subjection. Proceeding eastwards he invaded the states which had refused allegiance and waged incessant warfare until in six years he had *fought* the Five Indias."[2] "Then having enlarged his territory he increased his army, bringing the elephant corps up to 60,000 (!) and the cavalry to 100,000 (!) and reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon."[3]

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[1] Watters, i, pp. 343-45.

[2] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 345.

[3] It seems that due to the assistance which he had to give to his sister in running the administration of the Maukhari kingdom, Harsha was forced to abandon his ancestral capital Sthāneśvara and stay at Kānyakubja which naturally, therefore, must have become the seat of his government as well. It must have suited him also because with the expansion of his empire embracing almost the whole of Northern India, Kānyakubja naturally served as a central place to exercise his authority over his vast empire. Strategically also, Kānyakubja, being in the centre of the realm, must have been a more secure city than Sthāneśvara. Cf. Panikkar, *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, pp. 21-22.

But when, if at all, was Śaśāṅka defeated and Harsha's conquest of East India completed ? From Hsuan Chuang we learn that in 637 A.D. Śaśāṅka had already passed away and from the Aihole Inscription of Pulakeśin II we know that Harsha went against the latter before 634 A.D. His campaign against the Deccan ruler, according to Hsuan Chuang, was undertaken when he had "conquered the nations from east to west, and carried his arms to remote districts."[4] So Śaśāṅka must have disappeared from the scene sometime between 619 and 634 A.D. None of our contemporary sources, however, throw any light on the fact as to whether Harsha was able to punish him as promised by him.

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[1] Beal, i, p. 213.

The strength of the cavalry given here appears to be a mistake for 20,000. From the *Harshacharita* we learn that when Rājyavardhana was proceeding to Kānyakubja he had ordered Bhaṇḍi to accompany him "with some ten thousand horse" (*H.C.*, p. 175). We presume that the cavalry force at the command of the Pushpabhūti King must have been much larger than what he took with himself.

[2] Watters, i, p. 343. According to the other reading he "had brought the Five Indias under allegiance". Cf. Beal, i, p, 213; *Life*, p. 83.

[3] Watters, i, p. 343.

[4] Beal, ii, pp. 256–57.

From the *Life of Hiuen Tsang*, we, however, learn of another expedition of Harsha in the east. It tells us of his attack and subjugation of Koṅgoda in Orissa by 643 A.D.[1] But unfortunately we have no details of this expedition too. All that we know is that it was a powerful country, for the Chinese pilgrim says "as the towns were naturally strong there was a gallant army, which kept the neighbouring countries in awe, and so there was no powerful enemy."[2] So the arms of Harsha penetrated as far as Ganjam and probably Karṇasuvarṇa in the East.

From the *Harshacharita* we learn that Harsha "took tribute from an inaccessible land of snowy mountains."[3] This had led historians to believe that the conquests of Harsha extended to Nepal in the North-East.[4] But, unfortunately, we have no other evidence to clarify the statement of Bāṇa and this has naturally given rise to difference of opinion amongst the historians.[5]

We are further told in the *Harshacharita* that Harsha "having pounded the king of Sindh, made his wealth his own."[6] On the other hand, Hsuan Chuang tells us that Sindh was being ruled by a king "who was of the Śūdra caste" and "a believer in Buddhism."[7] So it appears that Harsha, during

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1. *Life*, p. 159.
2. Watters, ii, p. 197; *Life*, pp. 146-47; Beal, ii, p. 207.
3. *H.C.*, p. 76. —Text, p. 91.
   अत्र परमेश्वरेण तुषारशैलभुवो दुर्गाया गृहीतः करः ।
   Ettinghausen believes this land to be Tukhara country (*Harsha-Vardhana*, p. 47).
4. Cf. Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 30; Panikkar, *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 20; Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 354.
5. The problem has been discussed by us separately elsewhere.
6. *H.C.*, p. 76. —Text, pp. 90-91.
   अत्र पुरुषोत्तमेन सिन्धुराजं प्रमथ्य लक्ष्मीरात्मीकृता ।
7. Watters, ii, p. 252; Beal, ii, p. 272.

his conquest of Western India, probably defeated the king of Sindh and made him a tributary instead of annexing his kingdom to his own empire.

There is not even a grain of doubt that, in addition to Sindh, Harsha annexed the kingdom of Valabhī as well which was ruled by Dhruvasena II or Dhruvabhaṭa as mentioned by Hsuan Chuang.[1] The Nausari Copper-plate Grant of Jayabhaṭa informs us that "over the illustrious Dadda with the grace of a white cloud, there hung ceaselessly a canopy of glory gained by protecting the lord of Valabhī, who had been defeated by the great lord, the illustrious Harshadeva."[2] Thus we find that Dhruvasena II, after actual defeat in the battlefield or being afraid of the impending onslaught of the mighty prowess of Harsha, took shelter with the Gurjara ruler, Dadda II, who appears to have been a feudatory of the Chālukyan monarch, Pulakeśin II.[3] Harsha was not only a seasoned warrior but also an experienced statesman. He must have naturally been greatly perturbed at this triple alliance and like a shrewd diplomat tried to win over Dhruvasena II. He would have fully realised the strategic importance of the Valabhī kingdom. Valabhī was contiguous to the principality of Dadda and the kingdom of Pulakeśin II. He could not have afforded to leave Valabhī in the hands of a second rate ruler. Moreover, Harsha fully realised that his real enemy was not the ruler of Valabhī or the Gurjara king, but Pulakeśin II, the Chālukyan emperor, who at that time was most powerful in the Deccan. It must have been, therefore, his policy to strengthen his relations with the frontier state of Valabhī to break the power of the Chālukyan sovereign. He appears to have succeeded in his efforts. By a sheer stroke of diplomacy he won over the Valabhī king by offering him not only his paternal throne of Valabhī which he had annexed, but also that of Mālava and its dependencies.[4] Further, he cemented the alliance with Dhruvasena by giving his daughter in marriage to him and thereby making him his sincerest ally and a bulwark of his empire in the West.[1]

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 246.

[2] *I.A.*, xiii, p. 70.

[3] *E.I.*, vi, p. 10.

[4] Cf. Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 343.

Thus we see that Harsha ultimately became the undisputed sovereign of the North. He had virtually subdued or annexed all the states, big or small, worth the name from Kāmarūpa to Saurāshṭra and the Himalayas to the Narmada. But beyond the Narmada there was another ruler who had gradually, with his headquarters at Vātāpī (Badami), annexed or brought under sway all the principalities from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal under his sway except the Dravidian states in the extreme South. He was Pulakeśin II. In fact at this time the whole of India was divided between the rulers of Sthāneśvara and Vātāpī. Naturally Harsha considered him as the only potential enemy to be reckoned with. Harsha was ambitious and it is no wonder that he made huge preparations to subdue this monarch of the South and thrust his arm deep into the Deccan like Samudragupta. We get an account of the huge preparations of this war from the itinerary of Hsuan Chuang who states: "The great King Śīlāditya at this time was invading east and west, and countries far and near were giving in allegiance to him, but Mo-ha-la-cha (Maharashtra) refused to become subject to him" and so "Śīlāditya rājā, boasting of his skill and the invariable success of his generals, filled with confidence himself marched at the head of his troops to contend with this prince (Pulakeśin) but he was unable to *prevail* or subjugate him" although he had with him "troops from the Five Indias and the best generals from all countries."[1]

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 246; *Life*, p. 149.

It was not unusual for a permanent sovereign of Northern India to offer his daughter in marriage to a defeated or to a frontier king. The policy underlying it is not inexplicable. A vanquished king may prove to be the most dangerous enemy if he succeeds in enlisting the sympathy and support of some powerful neighbouring rulers. Again, a frontier king may be made a loyal and faithful ally if he can be held by the ties of matrimony. We already know how some ten centuries back Prasenajit offered the hands of his daughter to Ajātaśatru whom he successfully defeated and made a war-captive. Again, the Syrian Emperor, Seleukos I, made the eastern frontiers of his empire secure by establishing matrimonial alliance with the Mauryan Emperor, Chandragupta. As for a similar instance we may refer to the Gupta-Vākāṭaka alliance in the reign of Chandragupta II. Niharranjan Ray advances the same motive when he observes that "Harsha was actuated probably by one of the most important political motives which influenced the policy of the Northern and Southern paramount sovereigns. It was the Narbada frontier problem. The problem presented itself as early as the time of the Imperial Guptas who tried to solve it either by matrimonial alliances or by conquests. The same problem confronted Harsha. The Chālukyas were at this time the paramount power in Southern India and were seeking every opportunity to push towards Northern India, either through the Narbada frontier or the Mahanadi valley. Harsha probably foresaw the situation and hastened to conquer the Valabhī king who might stand as a bar to the advancement of the Chālukya power" (*I.H.Q.*, 1927, p. 777).

The swords clashed on the banks of the Narmada.[2] It must have been obviously a sanguinary and prolonged war; but despite Harsha's military genius and adequate preparations for such a trial of strength, the result achieved by him was complete frustration. Pulakeśin successfully withstood the attack, and forced his enemy to abandon his ambitious project of conquering the Deccan.

Most of the historians are of the opinion that Pulakeśin defeated Harsha.[3] But on the face of the available lines of evidence it does not appear to be exactly correct, although the royal panegyrist, Ravikīrti, while narrating the achievements of his patron, poetically says: "Harsha, whose lotus feet were arrayed with the rays of the jewels of the diadems of hosts of feudatories prosperous with unmeasured might, through him (Pulakeśin) had his mirth melted away by fear, having become loathsome with his rows of lordly elephants fallen in battle."[1] It is also true that certain inscriptions directly and indirectly confirm the statement of Ravikīrti, as for instance the Nausari Grant of Jayabhaṭa, Surat Plates of *Yuvarāja* Śryāśraya Śilāditya and the Nirpan Grant of Nāgavardhana. We are told in the former that Pulakeśin acquired "the banners of victory in battle with Harshavardhana, the lord of the region of the north," while the others allude to the same event by stating thet Pulakeśin assumed the title of *Parameśvara* after defeating "the war-like lord of all the region of the North."[2] But the above mentioned inscriptions which substantiate the statement of Ravikīrti are only one-sided as all of them are either those of Pulakeśin himself or of his loyal feudatories. On the other hand, the information supplied by Hsuan Chuang on the very same event runs counter to what has been stated in the aforesaid epigraphs. The Chinese pilgrim had become very much attached to Harsha and was a close associate of his, and, as such, we may say that the views expressed by him on such matters are liable to be partial and thus favourable for his royal patron. But since Hsuan Chuang was a staunch Buddhist, the views expressed by him in respect of his patron's political career should be considered to be sufficiently trustworthy and acceptable to sober history. The fact that he has given a fairly reliable account of Harsha's rival, Pulakeśin, in connection with his visit to the latter's kingdom should also be borne in mind in assessing the historical value of his statement regarding Harsha's campaigns in the Deccan. Regarding Pulakeśin he says that "relying on the strength of his heroes and elephants the king treated the neighbouring countries with contempt.........the benevolent sway of the king reached far and wide and his vassals served him with perfect loyalty" and "relying on these advantages he holds in contempt all the frontier powers that contend with him for the mastery."[1] In view of these facts it is impossible to support the views of those historians who are of the opinion that Pulakeśin defeated Harsha. It is, however, true that the North Indian ruler could not succeed in his attempt to reduce into subjection the Deccan ruler or annex any part of his territory so long as he was alive.

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 239; *Life*, p. 147; Beal, ii, p. 256-57.

Altekar has suggested that "the cause of the war between Harsha and Pulakeśin seems to be the conflict of their imperial plans in Gujarat and Mālava."

[2] *I.A.*, viii, p. 242; cf. Smith, *Early History of India*, pp. 353 and 442; Mookerji, *Harsha*, pp. 34 and 43; Panikkar, *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 22.

[3] Panikkar, *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 24; Niharranjan Ray, *I.H.Q.*, 1927, p. 789; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 237; Mookerji, *Harsha*, pp. 34-35.

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[1] Aihole Inscription, *E.I.*, vi, p. 6 (verse 23 line 11); *ibid.*, viii, p. 244. Dubreuil surprisingly states that "it is noteworthy that the Aihole Inscription makes no mention of King Harshavardhana" (*Ancient History of the Deccan*, p. 113). Panikkar also, curiously, failed to detect the reference to Harsha in the same inscription (*Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 23).

[2] *I.A.*, xiii, p. 74; *E.I.*, v, p. 57 (Ins. No. 401); *I.A.*, ix, p. 125. See also Karnul Grant of Ādityavarmā, *ibid.*, xi, p. 68; Togur-shode Grant, *ibid.*, vi, p. 87; Nausari Plates of Pulakeśirāja, *E.I.*, v, pp. 57-58 (Ins. No. 404); Vakkaleri Plates of Kīrtivarman II, *ibid.*, v, p. 202; *I.A.*, ix, p. 128; an unpublished grant of Yuvarāja Śilāditya Śryāśraya, *ibid.*, viii, p. 74.

Southern Campaign

We have mentioned above that the Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Chuang, has incidentally mentioned that Harsha overran the whole of India and brought the Five Indias under his subjection.[2] We have seen above that Harsha's political supremacy extended from the Brahmaputra in the East to the River Śatadru in the West and from the Himalayas in the North to the Narmada in the South. But this is, however, not all. His sphere of influence comprised not only the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley (Kāmarūpa) but also Valabhī and Gandhāra and probably also certain smaller states in Rajputana or, in other words, as far as the Sindhu. The kingdom of Sindh was also included in his dominion if Bāṇa is to be believed.[3] But the statement of the Chinese pilgrim remains uncorroborated unless it is definitely proved that Harsha, during some period of his reign, exercised sovereign sway over the Deccan or at least certain portions of it so as to justify himself of being styled the paramount sovereign of India. Some light has been thrown on this very subject by his other court-poet Mayūra who is believed to be one of the nearest relations of Bāṇa.[4] It is really strange that while Bāṇa has tried to prove that his royal patron was undisputed monarch of the whole of Northern India, Mayūra followed in his footsteps, but in respect of the Deccan. From what has been stated by him it appears that Harsha's political supremacy was acknowledged not only in Kuntala but also in such far-flung regions as the country of the Choḷas and Kāñchī; although he has not forgotten to describe him as the supreme ruler of the Madhyadeśa (the Middle country), the valley of the river Ganges.[1] The province of Kuntala during this period was

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 239; *Life*, p. 147.

[2] Watters, i, p. 343.

[3] *H.C.*, p. 76.

[4] According to literary evidence Bāṇa and Mayūra were related by marriage. Madhusūdana in his *Bhāvabodhinī*, which is a commentary on the *Sūryaśataka* of Mayūra, and some other writers have stated that the

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former was the son-in-law of the latter (*I.A.*, ii, pp. 127-28; *ibid.*, i, pp. 113-14). In Tawney's translation of the Jaina work *Prabandhachintāmaṇi* of Merutuṅga, Mayūra is represented as Bāṇa's brother-in-law, having Bāṇa's sister as his wife (pp. 64-66). It, however, seems that the manuscripts of the *Prabandhachintāmaṇi* differ, since the one edited by Yajñeśvara gives a different account of our tale, as it states that Bāṇa's wife was Mayūra's sister (quoted by Jhalakikara, in his second edition of the *Kāvyaprakāśa*, Chap. 1, 2-3, pp. 10-11).

[1] भूपालाः शशिभास्करान्वयभुवः के नाम नासादिताः ।
भर्तारं पुनरेकं एव हि भुवः त्वां देव मन्यामहे ।
येनांगम् परिभृष्य कुन्तलम् अथाकृष्य व्युदस्यायतम् ।
चौलं प्राप्य च मध्यदेशं अधुना कांच्यां करः पातितः ॥

This stanza is quoted under Mayūra's name, in the '*Subhāshitāvali*' of Vallabhadeva and is supposed by Peterson also to refer to the conquest of the Emperor Harsha (Peterson's edition, *Introduction*, p. 86).

See also Quackenbos, *The Sanskrit Poems of Mayūra*, p. 234. Referring to Harsha's conquests in the Deccan, as stated by Mayūra, Majumdar says, "a verse of Mayūra, a court-poet of Harsha, is quoted to prove his patron's success against Aṅga, Kuntala, Choḷa, Madhyadeśa and Kāñchī. But the author conceives the earth as his patron's wife and uses the words *aṅga*, etc., also in the additional sense respectively of her body, hair, cloth, chest and girdle. There is no doubt that here is a poetic imagination, showing the author's knowledge of the *Kāmaśāstra*, but having nothing to do with geography or history" (*Classical Age*, p. 106, n.1). We regret to say that it has not been possible for us to accept the theory of that learned historian since it is based on a misinterpretation of the two verses in question. What actually has been stated by Mayūra in the latter half of the second verse is that "after obtaining the Choḷa (country) as also the Madhyadeśa now (*adhunā*) he has laid his hands on Kāñchī". It undoubtedly tends to show that the conquest of Kāñchī took place after Harsha had conquered the Choḷa country or, in other words, amongst all the kingdoms bounded by the Narmada in the North, the Tungabhadra in the South, the Godavari and the Bhima in the East and the Arabian Sea in the West, thus comprising the modern Kanarese districts of the Maharashtra and the Andhra State. The Choḷa country is obviously the so-called Choḷamaṇḍalam and corresponds to the eastern part of the Madras State. Kāñchī is the same as the modern Conjeeveram and the territory implied by it is very probably the Chingleput district also in the Madras State. Now the question that arises here is: when were the conquests of the regions or territories mentioned by Mayūra effected? Certainly there was no possibility for the same during the reign of Pulakeśin II. That the Chālukya king ascended the throne almost at the same time as Harshavardhana is beyond cavil. The date of accession of the former, has been fixed by scholars at about *c.* 608 A.D., but it may be 610 A.D. as well.[1] From the Aihole Inscription of that Chālukya king and also from the inscriptions of his feudatories which have been found in different parts of the Deccan, it clearly appears that he was undoubtedly the paramount sovereign of that part of India, except of the extreme South where the Dravidian powers were holding sway besides of course the Pallavas. His paramountcy was thus acknowledged by all the kings ruling from the Narmadā in the North up to the

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enumerated by the poet, Kāñchī was the last to be conquered. Majumdar has taken Madhyadeśa in the sense of 'chest' of the earth and *aṅga* as her 'body'. We also do not understand why the poet would refer to the 'chest' separately after mentioning the 'body' of the earth, which includes it. Moreover, we fail to understand why the poet would only refer to the 'body' (aṅga), the 'chest' (madhyadeśa) and the 'hair' (Kuntala) instead of mentioning all the parts of the body if we follow Majumdar's line of thinking. Similarly, mention of only the 'cloth' (Choḷa) and the 'girdle' (Kāñchī) without any reference to other things constituting the full dress of a woman in those days, is really inexplicable. From the context it clearly appears that Mayūra is referring to the conquests of his royal patron without any reference to the Earth as his beloved one. Even if the poet is supposed to have resorted to double *entendre* in those two verses, their historical significance would not be affected in any way.

[1] Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 441; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 234; Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, pp.351, 356; *E.I.*, xviii, pd.26016-.

Krishna in the South and from the Bay of Bengal in the East up to the Arabian Sea in the West. There was, thus, no possibility of his northern contemporary to penetrate into any part of the Deccan; nor was there any opportunity for him, such as a rebellion of the feudatory chiefs of the Chālukyas, which might have served his motive of occupying some portion of the Chālukyan realm. Pulakeśin II ruled at least up to 640 A.D. If we are to accept the information supplied by Mayūra as correct, we can only say that the conquests referred to by him were made by Harsha some time after the death of his powerful rival in the South. The immediate successors of Pulakeśin II were weaklings and it is a fact that after his death, the Chālukya empire had shrunk considerably because of the aggression of the Pallava king, Narasiṁhavarman I. We must note also that there was a period of interregnum for about thirteen years in the Chālukya history following the death of Pulakeśin II. The political condition in the Deccan after the death of that Chālukyan emperor thus created an opportunity for Harsha of fulfilling his ambition of conquering the Deccan. In this connection, we may mention here that Hsuan Chuang has referred to an expedition of Harsha to Koṅgoda (Ganjam District, Orissa State) which was undertaken by him in the year 643 A.D.[1] Since his army had penetrated so far into the south-eastern part of the Deccan, it stands to reason, how the Choḷa country and Kāñchī successively came to be conquered by him, as stated by Mayūra. It is undoubtedly creditable for Harsha to have conquered Kāñchī by routing the army of such a powerful Pallava king as Narasiṁhavarman I (630-668 A. D.) who is known to have defeated Pulakeśin II and prevented him from extending his territory beyond the River Krishna. In fact the empire of the Chālukyas could not expand beyond the Narmada in the North and Krishna in the South because of the two mighty rulers, Harshavardhana and Narasiṁhavarman I. The conquest of Kāñchī undoubtedly proves the military superiority of Harsha since he succeeded in bringing his Deccan campaign to a successful close by defeating his rival Narasiṁhavarman who was a military genius of no mean order and conquering his territory, whatever be his policy in respect of it, whether liberation or annexation. We are, however, of the opinion that Harsha's military campaigns in the Deccan were undertaken in the very same spirit as that of the *digvijaya* of Samudragupta in that part of India. The conquest of the Choḷa country and Kāñchī probably took place some time about 643 A. D. in which year Koṅgoda also passed into the hands of the North Indian Emperor. We, however, do not think that the Choḷa country and Kāñchī were permanently annexed to the Pushpabhūti empire.

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[1] *Life*, p. 159, 172.

So far as the conquest of Kuntala is concerned, which is one of the regions specifically mentioned by Mayūra as one of the territories conquered by Harsha, we believe that it was effected a couple of years after his campaigns in the extreme South. In course of his expedition to Kuntala, several other provinces which formed parts of the Chālukyan kingdom, might have fallen in his hands, although they have not been mentioned by Mayūra. Since there was a period of interregnum following the death of Pulakeśin II, we strongly suspect that certain portions of the kingdom of the Chālukyas in the western part of the Deccan passed into the hands of the Emperor of northern India.[1]

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[1] Regarding the historical value of the Gaddemane Inscription, discovered in Mysore which mentions a certain king by the name of Śīlāditya and attributes to him the setting up of an inscribed stone-slab commemorating the death of his general Pettaṇi Satyāṅka who fell fighting with a tribe of hunters forming the army of Mahendra, Sastri is of the opinion that the Śīlāditya referred to in that commemorative epigraph is undoubtedly Harsha Śīlāditya and Mahendra was Mahendravarman I (600-630 A.D.) of the Pallava Dynasty (*Mysore Archaeological Survey Report*, 1923, p. 83 ff: *Svasti Śri Śila-ādityan diśām-Bharggan ākevaḷan aggaḷa-kaṇtakan, perāḷke vare Pettaṇi Satyāṅkan aṭṭuḷabhatam* bedare *Mahendran, Beḍara-rāyara Malappara* Kalegaduḷe *viṛidu svarggālaya,Khāṛidan beḷeya māla kādon kalyāṇam akke aḷivon pañchā-ma*). This opinion of Sastri was fully endorsed by Nihar Ranjan Ray (*I. H. Q.*, 1927, p. 789). But the correct identity of those two rulers was suggested by Majumdar, in whose opinion Śīlāditya was the prince Śryāśraya Śīlāditya, grandson or son of Pulakeśin II and Mahendra was Mahendravaraman II

Chronology of the Campaigns of Harshavardhana

The oft-quoted remark of Hsuan Chuang that "Harsha waged incessant warfare until in six years he had brought the Five Indias under allegiance", and then "reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon", has been a source of great controversy in deciding the chronology of Harsha's campaigns.[1] On the basis of this information, Mookerji states that Harsha's conquests were over by about 612 A. D., and that he had become king six years earlier, in 606 A. D.[2] Vaidya has also fallen in line with that learned historian and observes that "Harsha conquered India during the course of six years."[3] But the statement of the Chinese pilgrim does not appear to be true to the letter. It has now been already established that he conquered Koṅgoda in or about 642–43 A. D. and defeated Śaśāṅka, if at all, between 619–634 A. D. Therefore, Harsha could not have been the undisputed paramount sovereign of Northern India within a period of six years. Keeping these facts in view, let us now discuss the dates of his different campaigns.

We know from Hsuan Chuang's itinerary that, in his determination to punish Śaśāṅka, Harsha first went towards the East. He was, however, unable to get hold of the Gauḍa

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(668-670 A.D.) of the Pallava dynasty (*I.H.Q.*, 1929, p. 235; *Classical Age*, p. 245; cf. also p. 106, n.l). Taking every aspect of the main question into consideration, we are of the opinion that the theory of Majumdar is correct. Sastri has completely overlooked the fact that if we identify Śīlāditya with Harsha and Mahendra with Mahendravarman I, we will have to admit that Harsha penetrated into the Deccan sometime before 634 A.D. which will not be acceptable to history in the face of the evidence furnished by the Aihole Inscription of Pulakeśin II. The Gaddemane Inscription, thus, has no bearing on the political history of the reign of Harsha.

[1] Watters, i, p. 343.
'Five Indias' comprised Sārasvata (the Punjab), Kānyakubja, Mithilā (Bihar), Gauḍa (Bengal) and Utkala (Orissa). See Sen, D.C., *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, p. 385; Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 353, n.2; Havell, *Aryan Rule in India*, p.191, n.l.

[2] *Harsha*, p.36, n.l.

[3] *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, i, p.13.

king, for he appears to have left his kingdom and fled towards the South. Harsha, therefore, could not find exactly his whereabouts and remained satisfied by annexing the regions lying between the Son and the Brahmaputra to his kingdom and appointed his friend and companion, Mādhavagupta, as the viceroy of that part of eastern India.[1] The conquest of the Eastern part of India which comprised the territory of Śaśāṅka by Harsha might have taken place before 612 A. D.; for, according to Hsuan Chuang, Harsha first"proceeded eastwards, invaded the States which had refused allegiance, and waged incessant warfare, until in six years, he had brought the Five Indias under his allegiance."[2] But it is probable that his Eastern conquests might have continued up to 618 A. D., for, according to Ma-twan-lin, the Chinese encyclopaedist, "in the year 618, there were great troubles in the kingdom"; and we know for certain that, in the year 619 A. D., Śaśāṅka was still

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1. Vaidya thinks that after conquering Śaśāṅka, Harsha pardoned him and married his daughter who had been offered to Rājyavardhana (*History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, i, p. 328). What resulted from Harsha's campaign against Śaśāṅka was that the latter had to eschew his ambition to become the master of the whole of Northern India. He fled from Kānyakubja, leaving the Maukhari territory to its fate, and remained content with some portion of his own kingdom in Bengal and Orissa, where he was ruling before his conflict with Rājyavardhana. This part of his kingdom seems to have become subject to Harsha during his expedition to Koṅgoda in about 642 A.D.

   The assumption that Mādhavagupta was appointed viceroy seems probable, if the evidence of the *Harshacharita* and that of the Aphsad Inscription are taken together into consideration. The former mentions Mādhavagupta as a youthful companion of Harsha at the Sthāneśvara court, while from the latter, it is evident that he was ruling over the region of Magadha and is credited "with the desire to associate himself with the glorious Harsha (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 204, 207; श्री हर्षदेव निज संगम वांछया). This appointment was perhaps made by Harsha either to reward his royal services rendered during the beginning of his career or to make him a bulwark against the aggression of the king of Gauḍa, who was in power in the South-western part of Bengal and the Northern part of Orissa, at least up to 619 A.D.

2. Watters, i, p. 343.

in power in the coastal region of Orissa as evidenced by the Ganjam Copper-plate Inscription of Mādhavarāja II, a feudatory of that king, issued in that year.[1]

After consolidating his power in the East, Harsha turned towards the West and conquered Valabhī and its dependencies. According to Smith, this event "seems to have occurred later than A. D. 633 and before Hsuan Chuang's visit to western India in 641 or 642."[2] But, according to the same author, Harsha's war against Pulakeśin, took place in "about the year 620 A. D.", while the Chinese pilgrim clearly states that he went against the Chālukya monarch, after subjugating the countries from East to West.[3] It is, therefore, highly probable that the conquest of Valabhī preceded Harsha's attempt to conquer the Deccan – contrary to what has been stated by Smith.[4] Ma-twan-lin at this stage, however, comes to our rescue, for, according to a statement of his, "In the years 618 and 627, there were great troubles in the kingdom since the King Śīlāditya made war and fought such battles as had never been before."[5] From this, it appears that the war with the Valabhī king took place in or about 627-29 A. D.[6]

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1. *E.I.*, vi, p.143.
   चतुरुदधिसलिलवीची मेखलानिलीनायां सद्वीप नगर पत्तनवत्यां वसुन्धरायां गौप्ताब्दे वर्षशतत्रये वर्तमाने महाराजाधिराज श्रीशशांक राजे शासति ।
2. *Early History of India*, p. 354.
3. *Ibid*., p. 353; Beal, ii, p. 256.
4. Altekar is also of the opinion that "the assumption that Harsha may have marched against Valabhī, after his attempt to defeat Pulakeśin II, proved of no avail, is very improbable. Such an endeavour, to remove any enemy in the flank, was essential for Harsha. Northern powers are usually seen consolidating their position in the north, up to Kathiawad, before launching an attack on the trans-Vindhyan regions. The Mauryas had conquered Kathiawad before attacking the Deccan. The Muslims attacked Devagiri only after they had conquered Gujrat and Kathiawad. It would, therefore, seem almost certain that Harsha's winning over of the Valabhī ruler must have preceded his offensive against Pulakeśin II" (*A.B.O.R.I.*, xiii, 1932, pp. 304-05).
5. *I.A.*, ix, p. 19.
6. Altekar fixed the event "sometime about 630 A.D." (*A.B.O.R.I.*, xiii, p.305); Panikkar, without giving any reasons, states that Harsha defeated

Dhruvasena appears to have ascended the throne sometime before 629 A. D. which is one of the dates presented by his epigraphic records.[1] It is highly probable that he was crowned a few years before 627 A.D. in which year Valabhī was attacked by Harsha and he being unable to save his kingdom, fled and took shelter at the court of Dadda II, the Gurjara king of Broach. It is evident from one of the inscriptions of the son and successor of that Gurjara king that Dhruvasena, as a fugitive, had taken shelter at the court of his father when the Valabhī kingdom was invaded and conquered by Harsha. It may be noted here that the ruler of Valabhī was an exact contemporary of the Gurjara king mentioned above who also appears to have ascended the throne about the same time as the former.[2] Although this fact has come to be mentioned in

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the Valabhī king in 636 A.D. (*Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 24); Das Gupta places the event between c. 629 and 639 A.D. (*I.C.*, vi, p. 451).

[1] *I.A.*, vi, p. 13 ff.

[2] Some scholars are of the opinion that because the inscriptions of Dadda II, dated in the years 629 and 641 A.D. do not mention about the protection given by him to the Valabhī king, and that because this event is mentioned only in the records of the successors of Dadda II, this important political event took place after 641 A.D. and the king of Valabhī was Dharasena IV. We may, however, point out in this connection that according to this theory the event must have taken place sometime after the death of Pulakeśin II in 642 A.D., as the last known date of Dadda II is 641 A.D. and that of Dhruvasena II is 643 A.D., since he was present at the Prayāga Assembly of Harsha which took place in that year. The earliest known date of Dharasena IV is also 645 A.D. In these circumstances, we fail to understand how a petty chief of Broach dared to give protection to the king of Valabhī against the Emperor of Northern India. We definitely know that after the death of Pulakeśin II his successors were not in a position for a considerable period to render any help to their feudatories. Besides, there was no other power at that time under whose protection the Gurjara ruler of Broach could have dared to act in hostility towards Harsha. These arguments also hold good against the suggestion of Smith.

We believe that Harsha's war with Dhruvasena II took place before the former attacked the territory of Pulakeśin II. The reason as to why Dadda II made no reference to his giving protection to Dhruvasena may be due to one of the two facts as it appears to us: either because his vanity was wounded by the Valabhī King's leaving the inscriptions of the successor of Dadda II, he himself has made no reference to it in his own inscriptions probably because there was a sudden change in the political allignment due to the matrimonial alliance that was established very soon between the royal houses of Valabhī and Sthāneśvara, unless there be some special reason in view of which he refrained himself from making any reference to it. It is more than evident that the Valabhī king became the son-in-law of Harsha and personally attended one of the quinquennial assemblies at Prayāga in which Hsuan Chuang had also participated.[1] Harsha probably wanted to secure the frontiers in Western India by having the powerful ruler of Valabhī as [his nearest relative. Instances of such matrimonial alliances to secure one's position, as mentioned above, are not wanting in history.

The date of Harsha's conflict with the Chālukya monarch has also been one of the great controversies. As already stated, Smith fixed it to be about 620 A.D., while Fleet and Mookerji, on the authority of the date of the Hyderabad Grant, opined that this conflict took place sometime before 612 A.D.[2] The date suggested by Smith is not correct, while the suggestions of the learned scholars like Mookerji and Fleet are also not in the neighbourhood of the correct date.

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the side of his protector and becoming the son-in-law of his enemy, Harshavardhana, or because he could not attribute to himself this temporary political achievement for fear of annoying his overlord, the Chālukyan monarch on whose support actually he dared to go against the North Indian monarch. We do not see any other cogent reason for the silence on the part of the Gurjara King relating to an important political event about which much has been said by his successors in their records.

[1] Watters, ii, p. 246; *Life*, p. 185.

[2] *Early History of India*, p. 353; Vaidya accepts the date suggested by Smith (*History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, i, p.13); *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, p.351; *Harsha*, p.36, n.l. See also *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1939, pp. 584, 604; K.C. Chattopadhyaya assigns it between 610-12 A.D.; Das Gupta places the event between 618-27 A.D. (*I.C.* vi, p. 453); according to Panikkar the war took place in 636 A.D. (*Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 24); as Dubreuil overlooked the name of Harsha in the Aihole Inscription, he has erroneously assigned the event to 637-38 A.D. (*Ancient History af the Deccan*, p. 113).

The Hyderabad Grant of 612 A.D. brings to our notice that Pulakeśin assumed the title *Parameśvara* by "defeating the hostile kings who had applied themselves (or a hostile king who had applied himself) to the contest of a hundred battles."[1] Although it does not mention Harshavardhana by name, Fleet, on the authority of some subsequent records which more specifically refer that he acquired that title "by defeating the glorious Harshavardhana", wants us to believe that "by the title which was acquired by the victory over him (Harsha), that victory had then already been achieved."[2] But it will not be safe to conclude only from this piece of epigraphic evidence that Pulakeśin had defeated Harsha earlier than 612 A.D. If the glorious achievement of Pulakeśin, viz., the defeat of Harsha, was acquired before 612 A.D., the earlier inscriptions of that Chālukya king would also have been eloquent over it. But, as is the case, they do not even adumbrate the same. The title *Parameśvara* has no doubt been applied to Pulakeśin II in the Hyderabad Grant of 612 A.D., but it is a well-known fact that the royal panegyrists were not usually accustomed to weigh their words carefully, when they eulogised their patrons. Furthermore, that the title of *Parameśvara* had no connection whatsoever with the defeat of Harsha, is evident from the fact that Ravikīrti does not apply it to his patron in his famous composition, even though he therein refers to the defeat of Harsha euphemistically. Besides, the title *Parameśvara* was commonly applied to rulers in those days, whatever might have been their actual political status.[3] Most probably it was assumed by Pulakeśin II, as referred to in the Hyderabad Grant of 612 A.D., after defeating some king (or kings) during the early period of his political career.[4]

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[1] *I.A.*, vi, p. 73.

[2] *I.A.*, xix, p. 306; Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, p. 351.

[3] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 14, 214-18; *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, x, pp. 79.

[4] Tripathi suggests that when Pulakeśin "subsequently scored a brilliant triumph over Harsha he felt special pride in its possession, and thenceforth it became a sort of a secondary name or a substitute for a name to him (*aparanāmadheyaḥ*)" (*History of Kanauj*, p. 126), as indicated by the records of his successors. Cf. Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 237.

Regarding the date suggested by Fleet and Mookerji for Harsha's conflict with Pulakeśin II, there is one more difficulty which we cannot possibly lose sight of. Harsha ascended the throne sometime in 606–07 A.D. and got himself busy in settling the political affairs at Kānyakubja and conducting his campaigns in Eastern India apparently to dislodge his mortal enemy Śaśāṅka even from his own kingdom and annex his territory. Similarly, Pulakeśin II, who ascended the throne in or about 610 A.D., had been preoccupied for many years not merely in taking action against his uncle Maṅgaleśa for all the troubles created by him in respect of his accession to the throne but also in defeating the rulers of the adjoining territories who were once subservient to the Chālukyas with a view to annexing them permanently and thereby expanding his own kingdom from sea to sea.[1] The Chālukya feudatories fortunately have been mentioned in certain records of Pulakeśin II and they are Āppāyika, Govinda, Kadambas, Āḷūpas, Mauryas, Lāṭas, Mālavas and Gurjaras. Thus, if both Harsha and Pulakeśin II, and more particularly the latter, were extremely busy in the early part of their political career in consolidating their power and securing the stability of their respective kingdoms, it is extremely difficult to believe that the two monarchs met to measure their strength when their own position was not so very secure for such an armed hostility on a collosal scale, as stated by Hsuan Chuang and also by Ravikīrti in the Aihole Inscription. The date suggested by Fleet and Mookerji is certainly not opportune for that purpose. No sensible ruler would jeopardise his own position by undertaking such an armed conflict when his stability is not suitable enough for that purpose. It is only possible when both the monarchs had secured the frontiers of their respective territories and had gathered sufficient military strength for launching an armed hostility against each other. Judging the date

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It may be noted in this cennection that it is also very improbable that Harsha had a daughter of marriageable age in 612 A.D. whom he could offer to the Valabhī King in order to cement his alliance with him.

[1] *E.I.*, vi, p.10.

under discussion from this particular point of view, the statement of Hsuan Chuang appears to be correct. The pilgrim states: "the great king Śīlāditya at this time was invading east and west, and countries far and near were giving in allegiance to him, but Mo-ha-la-ch'a refused to become subject to him."[1] In support of the information supplied by that Chinese pilgrim it may be said that it has received ample corroboration from the Lohanera plate Inscription of Pulakeśin II (630 A.D.). While the compiler of that inscription describes his valour and exploits in detail, he is altogether silent about the most notable achievement of that Chālukyan monarch–the defeat of Harsha—since it did not take place before the time of its publication as one would normally expect.[2] If the most significant achievement of Pulakeśin II, known to us, was unknown to the compiler of that inscription, the almost certain reason for it is that it was not yet an accomplished fact. The date of the Aihole Inscription (634 A.D.) has helped us in determining the lowest limit for the period of that war. Thus it will be seen that we have no other alternative but to fix the date of that memorable political event somewhere between 630 and 634 A.D.

Our chronology finds unmistakable confirmation in the statement of Hsuan Chuang that "after thirty years his arms reposed, and he governed everywhere in peace".[3] Without taking the words of the pilgrim in their literal sense, we really find that the campaigns of Harsha extended to a period of about thirty to thirty five years. But Watters has construed the passage to mean that Harsha "reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon."[4] He argues that "it is against text and context to make him represent the king as fighting continuously for thirty or thirty-six years."[5] But the argument becomes baseless, if we consider the task with which the Emperor was faced. The political affairs of Northern India,

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1. Watters, ii, p. 239.
2. Khare, *Sources af Mediaeval History of the Deccan*, i, p. 1ff.
3. Beal, i, p. 213.
4. Watters, i, p. 343.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 346.

in those days, were extremely complicated; and before taking any step to build up an empire, Harsha must have been extremely cautious, as stated by Watters, except in Northern India, as is evident from the statement of the pilgrim, who clearly says that "he went from East to West, subduing all who were not obedient; the elephants were not unharnessed, nor the soldiers unhelmeted."[1] His expeditions were launched separately in different directions; and there seems to be no doubt in the rendering of Beal, another translator of Hsuan Chuang's itinerary, that his campaigns were spread over a period of about thirty years.[2] It will, thus, not be possible for us to support the statement of Fleet and Mookerji, noticed above, that Harsha's wars with Valabhī and Pulakeśin took place within 612 A.D. Besides, the fact stated by Hsuan Chuang that Harsha conquered Kaṅgoda in 642–43 A.D. still more disproves the theory of Fleet and Mookerji, and renders the translation of Watters unacceptable.

It is evident from what we have noticed above that Emperor Harsha, during the first thirty years of his career as a ruler, had to wage incessant wars against his political adversaries and even against those whom he considered to be potential dangers. He sheathed his sword only when he felt that there would be no more trouble to his newly founded empire, or obstruction to his peaceful administration. Circumstances forced him to appear in the role of a conqueror, despite his earnest love for peace as a true Buddhist and he played that part well, as testified to by literary and epigraphic evidence.

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[1] Beal, i, p. 213.

[2] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER III

THE PUSHPABHŪTIS OF STHĀNEŚVARA—III

(Reign of Harshavardhana—II)

Extent of the Empire of Harsha and Its Growth

We shall now try to determine, as far as possible, the limits of the empire of Harsha and find out the distant parts of India which had been gradually brought under his sovereign sway. In this connection, we may remember that the empire bequeathed by Prabhākaravardhana to his son Rājyavardhana extended only as far as the River Indus in the North-West and the West, the River Narmada in the South and the Maukhari kingdom in the East, as already discussed above. We have also noticed the circumstances under which the territory of Eastern Mālava came under the suzerainty of the Pushpabhūti rulers and Harsha had to act in the capacity of a regent of his sister Rājyaśrī in respect of the administration of the Maukhari kingdom. The regency of the Maukhari kingdom brought a considerable portion of modern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar under his authority without any war or conquest. Subsequently, as we know, he amalgamated the kingdoms of Sthāneśvara and Kānyakubja and made the capital of the latter the seat of his government, probably because of its central position in the considerably extended boundaries of the territories under his sway, stretching from the Indus in the West up to, probably, the Son and the Gandak in the East. Thus, we see that within a short while after his accession, Harshavardhana was the master of a vary large area of Northern India, almost without much effort.

Harsha, however, did not remain satisfied with the gifts of the Goddess of Royal Fortune; and, as we know, he proceeded towards Karṇasuvarṇa, in Eastern India, to punish Śaśāṅka, the murderer of his beloved brother, Rājyavardhana. During his campaigns in Eastern India, which lasted for several years, he appears to have conquered and brought under his suzerainty the whole areas extending from the eastern frontiers of the Maukhari kingdom up to the Brahmaputra, thus comprising virtually the whole of Magadha and the kingdom of Gauḍa in the East. That a very considerable portion of Uttar Pradesh was under his control is confirmed by the find-spots of his Madhuban (Śrāvastī) and Banskhera (Ahichchhatrā) Plates, discovery of a large number of his coins in the Fyzabad district, and the holding of one of his religious assemblies at Prayāga during the visit of Hsuan Chuang. It may be further noted here that Hsuan Chuang did not mention either the name of the ruler or even refer to him in respect of either of the following principalities in Uttar Pradesh such as Mo-tu-lo (Mathurā), Sa-t'a-ni-ssu-fa-lo (Sthāneśvara), Su-lu-k'in-na (Śrughna), Mo-ti-pu-lo (Matipura), Po-lo-hih-mo-pu-lo (Brahmapura), Su-fa-la-na-kiu-ta-lo (Suvarṇagotra), Ku-pi-sang-na (Govishāṇa), Ngo-hi-ch'i-ta-lo (Ahichchhatrā), Pi-lo-shan-na, Kah-pi-t'a (Kapitha), A-yu-t'e (Ayodhyā), A-ye-mu-k'a (Hayamukha), Po-lo-ya-ka (Prayāga), Kiao-Shang-mi (Kośāmbī), P'i-sha-ka (Viśoka), Shi-lo-fa-si-ti (Śrāvastī), Kie-pi-lo-fa-su-tu (Kapilvastu), Lan-mo (Rāmagrāma) Kou-Shih-na-ka-lo (Kuśīnagara), and Po-lo-na-se (Vārāṇasī)—since all of them were included in the empire of Harsha, with the exception of three viz., Mathurā, Matipura and Suvarṇagotra.[1] The kingdom of Mathurā is undoubtedly to be located in the Mathura district, but the country of Matipura, so far, has not been satisfactorily identified. It may be located, however, near the district of Bijnor which, to a certain extent, answers the topography of the country as given in the itinerary of the Chinese pilgrim.[1] Suvarṇagotra may be located in the district of Dehradun and identified with the modern Jaunsar-Bawar which is characterised even today by practice of polyandry and the supremacy of women in all matters, domestic, social and economic.[2] It is almost impossible to believe that Mathura lay beyond the empire of Harsha and so also the districts of Bijnor and Dehradun. If the aforesaid small principalities had remained independent as was the case with so many kingdoms in those days, then the Chinese pilgrim would have surely referred to their rulers and even supplied us the information about the caste they respectively belonged to. There is thus no doubt that the localities mentioned above were under the direct suzerainty of Harsha and no reasonable doubt can be entertained on this point, specially when they were so close to Sthāneśvara, the ancestral kingdom of Harsha.

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[1] Watters, i, pp. 302, 314, 318, 322, 329, 331, 333, 354, 359, 361, 365, 373, 377; *ibid.*, ii, pp.1, 20, 25, 47.

So far as the country of Kapilavastu is concerned, it has been specifically mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim that there was no sovereign and, as such, it cannot be considered to be a sovereign state. What the pilgrim actually mentions is that each city had its own chief. What we presume is that none of them enjoyed the power of a ruler but had some hand in the administration of the city only and were no better than *nagaramahāmātras* of the time. The mention of so many chiefs in the Kapilavastu country merely reflects the degenerated Śākyan constitution of ancient times.

That magadha also formed a part of Harsha's empire, is evident from the records of the Chinese ambassador, Wang-hiuen-tse, who has designated him as "the king of Magadha."[3] Besides, Hsuan Chuang informs us that Harsha constructed a bronze temple at Nalanda.[4] The discovery of his seals at Nalanda also bears testimony to the very same fact[5].

Relating to the regions beyond Magadha in the East, we know definitely from the itinerary of Hsuan Chuang that Harsha was encamping at Kajaṅgala (md. Kajughira near Monghyr) while he was conducting an expedition personally to Karṇasuvarṇa obviously to punish Śaśāṅka, the ruler of that country, with the sole intention of avenging the murder of his elder brother.[6] That Karṇasuvarṇa also formed a part of his dominion, at least during the later period of his rule, is confirmed by the fact that Hsuan Chuang, who visited that

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1. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India*, p. 399; Dey, *Geographical Dict. of Anc. and Med. India*, p. 128.
2. Majumdar, D.N., *Fortunes of Primitive Tribes*, pp. 68, 69, 214; *Races and Cultures of India*, pp. 188, 192-93; *Calcutta Review*, March, 1939, p. 312.
3. Watters, i, p. 351; *I.A.*, 1911, p. 111.
4. Watters, ii, p, 171; *Life*, p. 159.
5. Sastri, *Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material* (*M.A.S.I.*, No. 66), p. 67.
6. Watters, ii, p. 183.

country in about 637 A. D., does not refer to any king who might have been ruling there.[1] One may, therefore, take it to be an indication of the fact that the former kingdom of Saśāṅka had already been annexed by Harsha to his expanding empire.[2]

That during the later period of his life he extended his sway over Kaliṅga is evident from his conquest of Koṅgoda, which lay in the southern part of Orissa. The *Life of Hiuen Tsang* also tends to confirm the very same fact.[3] 'Shaman' Hwui-li, the author of that work, informs us that Jayasena, a learned Buddhist scholar of the time, who was a resident of Yashṭivana, was decreed to receive an annuity which was the annual "revenue of eighty large towns of Orissa" as a reward for his learning.[4] The patronage that was extended to Jayasena would not have been effective if Orissa had not been included in the empire of Harsha.[5] From the *Life* we further learn that the Emperor, on his return jonrney from Koṅgoda, had to encamp at different places in Orissa. In this connection we would like to draw the attention of scholars to the statement of Mayūra that Harsha conducted a campaign against the Choḷa country in which he came out victorious. Since the country of the Choḷas lay to the South of Orissa, there cannot be any doubt that the whole of the latter was included in the dominions of Harsha.

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[1] Watters, ii, p. 191.

[2] Cf. Banerji, *Bāṅgalār Itihāsa*, i, p. 109; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 42.

[3] *Life*, p. 159.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 154.
Probably Jayasena was running an educational institution and the amount sanctioned by Harsha was for its upkeep.

[5] Banerji believes that there is very little evidence to suppose that Orissa was ever included within the empire of Harsha (*History of Orissa*, i, pp. 129-32). Some other scholars also assume that Harsha's empire did not include Orissa as hundreds of inscriptions have been discovered in that region, but not a single one has been found in which Harsha or his era may have been referred to (*J.A.H.R.S.*, vi, p. 152). In this connection, it should be noted that, firstly, we have the contemporary evidence of Hsuan Chuang that Harsha conquered Koṅgoda and, secondly, that Harsha led his expedition to Orissa just less than five years before his death. Lack of epigraphic evidence, therefore, should not form the basis of argument against the conquest of that region by the Pushpabhūti emperor.

Thus, we see that Harsha was the master of the whole of Eastern India up to the Brahmaputra.[1] Majumdar, however, is of the opinion that "there is no reason to credit Harshavardhana with the conquest of territories east of Magadha". According to him, Hsuan Chuang's statement that I-lan-na-po-fa-to (Monghyr district) and Ka-chu-hoh-khi-lo (Kajaṅgala) were ruled by a different State and that Harshavardhana's temporary residence at the last named place, built of branches and boughs, was burnt on his departure, leaves no doubt that the emperor only carried on a military raid in this direction.[2] We may, however, point out in this connection that Hsuan Chuang has not mentioned about any of the kingdoms referred to in his itinerary as being subject to, or dependent on, Kānyakubja or Sthāneśvara. Due to this omission on the part of the pilgrim, Majumdar has even gone to the extent of suggesting that "so far as at least these accounts are concerned, Harshavardhana was merely king of Kanauj."[3] On the other hand, we know that the same pilgrim refers to Harsha as going on extensive conquests and conquering all the territories from East to West. We believe that as a very large area of Northern India was under the suzerainty of Harshavardhana, the Chinese pilgrim has not specifically mentioned the areas under his rule. The fact that the temporary residence of the Emperor at Kajaṅgala was destoryed after his departure does not suggest that the area was not under his suzerainty.[4] Hsuan Chuang has himself mentioned that the king made "visits of inspection throughout his dominion, not residing long at any place but having temporary buildings erected for his residence at each place of sojourn."[1] It, therefore, seems to have been a practice of the royal court.

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[1] Cf. Smith, *Early History of India*, pp. 352, 354; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 41ff; Panikkar, *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 27; Tripathi, *History of Kanauj*, p. 115 ff.

[2] *J.B.O.R.S.*, 1923, p. 314.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 314.

[4] Cf. Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 41.

Regarding the extent of Harsha's empire in the North, Bāṇa tells us that he "took tribute from an inaccessible land of snowy mountains."[2] Some scholars are, however, not prepared to accept this piece of information as true to fact, while others have admitted it to be correct. The land lying to the South of the snowy mountains, obviously, would mean the sub-montane region of the Himalayas stretching from the Śatadru in the West to the River Mahānandā or the Tista in the East. During the 4th century A.D. that region was covered entirely by four kingdoms, viz., Nepal, Kartṛipura, Bahudhanyā and the Kulūta country, as we know from the Allahabad pillar Inscription of Samudragupta and the *Mahābhārata.*[3] No mention of Kartṛipura, however, is to be found in any relevant record of the 6th or the 7th century A.D.; but it is more than evident that most part of the aforesaid region was covered only by one kingdom and that is Nepal which might be said to have extended in those days from one of the two aforesaid eastern rivers upto the River Alakanandā, a tributary of the Gaṅgā, in the West. The "inaccessible land of snowy mountains", mentioned by Bāṇa in the *Harshacharita*, may be *Strīrājya* (Jaunsar-Bawar region of the Dehradun district) mentioned by Hsuan Chuang or Nepal which in ancient times covered a considerable portion of the sub-montane Himalayan region, than it does today. To the west of Nepal there was undoubtedly a small hill state during the 7th century A.D., reference to which has been made by the Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Chuang, and that is Su-fa-la-na-kiu-ta-lo, a kingdom which was administered by women only (*Strīrājya*).[4] We have already located it in the Jaunsar-Bawar area of the Dehradun district as it answers adequately to the description of it as recorded in the *Si-yu-ki.* Now the question arises: whether Harsha ruled over Nepal and that *Strīrājya*, or exercised political supremacy over the latter only as, in either of the two cases, the statement of Bāṇa would be justifiable. Unfortunately, there is a sharp difference of opinion among scholars as to whether Harsha ruled over Nepal or not, but no one has questioned as yet his sovereign sway over that small hill state bordering on Nepal. While Bühler, Indraji, Fleet, Vaidya, Panikkar, Smith and Mookerji are of the opinion that Harsha had annexed Nepal to his empire, scholars like Lèvi, Ettinghausen and Majumdar do not share that view.[1] Perahps the strongest plea in this respect is that of Mookerji who appears to have made a strong case for the acceptance of his theory; and it would be better if we take into consideration all his arguments so as to find out to what extent he has been able to solve this crucial problem. He says : ' the evidence for Harsha's conquest of Nepal is given as follows. Yuan Chwang mentions, as 'a recent king' of Nepal, Aṁśuvarman, whose inscriptions are dated Saṁvat 34, 39 and 45. It is believed that the era used by Aṁśuvarman (and in the other later Nepal inscriptions Nos. 9–15), is that of Śrī Harṣa which begins in A.D. 606-7, and not his own, because in his own and some other inscriptions he is described as a mere *Sāmanta* or *Mahāsāmanta*, a great feudal chief, under some other overlord. That the Harṣa era was in widest use in Northern India is testified to by Alberuni. No other era can meet the requirements of the case. There is further a definite statement in the Vaṁśāvalīs of Nepal that just before Aṁśuvarman's accession to the throne Vikramāditya came to Nepal and established his era there. Though the name of Vikramāditya and the era mentioned here are wrong, the statement probably points to Harsha's invasion of Nepal and to its result, the adaption of his era. V.A. Smith (*Early History of India*, 3rd Ed., p. 341 n.) accepts the theory of Harsha's conquest of Nepal against Sylvain Lèvi. The difficulty that

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[1] Watters, i, p. 344; Beal, ii, p. 193.

[2] *H. C.*, p. 76.

[3] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 8.

[4] Watters, i, p. 330; Beal, i, p. 199.

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[1] *I.A.*, xiii, p. 411 ff; *C.I.I.* iii, p. 117 ff; *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, i, p. 370; *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, p. 15; *Early History of India.*, p. 354; *Harsha*, p. 31 (see also the map); *Le Nepal*, ii, pp. 152–53; *Journal Asiatique*, 1894, Pt. ii, p. 55 ff; *Harsha Vardhana*, pp. 47, 57; *J.B.O.R.S.*, ix, (1923), p. 313 (see also *B. C, Law Volume*, i, p. 626 ff).

Aṁśuvarman's inscription, dated 34 Harṣa Saṁvat, shows that he was living in A.D. 640 while Yuan Chwang, who was in India between 637 and 642, refers to him as a recent king, may be explained away by the consideration that the pilgrim's was only hearsay evidence, because he did not himself visit Nepal. That the Harṣa era was used in Nepal may be inferred from the Nepal inscription dated 113 and 119 of Śiva Deva, who, according to another inscription (no. 153 of Jayadeva), married the grand-daughter of Ādityasena whose father, Mādhavagupta, is mentioned as a contemporary of Harṣa in the Aphsad Inscription (see *Gupta Inscriptions*). Now Ādityasena lived about A.D. 672 (c.f. Shāhpur Inscription, *ibid*.), and if we take his time to be fifty years earlier than his grand-daughter (Vatsadevī by name), his grandson-in-law Śiva Deva, should have lived about A.D. 720, and thus his inscriptions dated 113 and 119 can have a reference only to the Harṣa era to give that time for his life."[1] We regret to say that it has not been possible for us to see eye to eye with Mookerji in respect of his main argument and that is, the currency of the Harsha *Saṁvat* in Nepal indicates that he exercised political supremacy over that country at least in some portion of his reign. In order to explain our point of view, we would like to draw the attention of scholars to the use of Śaka *Saṁvat* in the Dravidian States from the 9th cent. onwards, where most of the temple records have been found to be dated in that particular era. The currency of the Śaka *Saṁvat* in the Deccan, as we know, was popularised by the Śaka Kshatrapas of Mālava, but there is not the slightest indication in the literary or epigraphic records that any one of those rulers had ruled over any portion of the Dravidian kingdoms, although the dynasty to which they belonged was the suzerain power over a considerable portion of the Deccan and Western India for well nigh three centuries. Since the Nepalese rulers of the 7th cent. A. D. became familiar with the Harsha *Saṁvat* because of the intimate cultural contact of their kingdom with the Gangetic basin, there can be no wonder if the era instituted by Harsha had found favour at their hands. There are other arguments which go against the acceptance of Mookerji's theory and they have been carefully summarised by Majumdar and other scholars mentioned above. For instance, in the opinion of Majumdar, of the "territories that V. Smith looked upon as belonging to Harsha there is certainly an element of doubt about Nepal. M. Ettinghausen admits it but Mr. Panikkar observes 'that the kingdom of Nepal had accepted him (Harsha) as suzerain'. Mr. Panikkar admits that 'there is still considerable difference of opinion among scholars' on this point, but, after carefully considering the different points of view, he concludes that 'Harsha era was used in Nepal and that Harsha's supremacy was recognized even in that distant and inaccessible kingdom'. Mr. Panikkar's view that 'there is no other era but Harsha's possibly in the beginning of the seventh century' is sufficiently refuted by the elaborate discussions of Sylvain Lèvi which have established at least the possibility of the era being of local or Tibetan origin. As to the 'statement in *Harshacharita* which implies that Harsha conquered a Himalayan territory difficult of access, M. Ettinghausen has shown that this country need not be looked upon as Nepal as most scholars have done on the authority of Bühler, but it most probably refers to a Tukhara country. Thus the 'mass of evidence' in favour of the hypothesis that Harshavardhana conquered Nepal is by no means 'almost conclusive' as Mr. Panikkar thinks and it is hardly fair at the present state of our knowledge to include Nepal within the empire of Harsha."[1]

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[1] *Harsha*, p. 31, n. 3.

Lèvi's theory that the era current in Nepal was not the one instituted by Harsha, but someone else of local or of Tibetan origin, is indeed difficult to accept. If there had been an era in Nepal before the time of Harsha, it would have manifested itself in some literary or epigraphic records in that country; but, unfortunately, there is not the slightest indication of it in either of them. Likewise, the currency of an era in Tibet before the time of Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po is hardly possible. That Tibetan king alone could have instituted an era and even enforced its currency in Nepal, as much as he could in his own country; but his ancestors were very much less cultured to think of the introduction of an era even for the purposes of administration. No Tibetan document prior to the time of Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po has been found which even adumbrates the use of an era in Tibet before his time. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that the date of the aforesaid ruler of Tibet has been computed, but only approximately, with the help of certain later Tibetan works and the unrecorded legends associated with his name, since the Chinese annals too do not throw any light on the date of his marriage with a princess belonging to the ruling family of China. This lack of information is primarily due to the fact that the system of writing was unknown in Tibet before the time of Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po and even after him for many decades; and although it was introduced by him it had not sufficiently developed for the purpose.

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[1] *J.B.O.R.S.*, ix (1923), p. 313.

After taking every aspect of the question into consideration we have come to the conclusion that Harsha did not exercise supremacy over Nepal in any form. While there is no positive evidence compelling us to accept the theory that he ruled over Nepal or that it was included within his sphere of influence, the available lines of information tend to show that he had no political authority over that country. King Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po, who has been universally admitted to be the greatest of all the Tibetan rulers, was an exact contemporary of Harsha, since he ruled from about 629 to at least 660 A.D.[1] From the information available about this king from the Tibetan Buddhist sources, it appears that, a few years after his accession, he conquered Nepal, portions of North Bihar and Bengal and even of Assam on the southern side of his kingdom as well as a number of Chinese provinces on the northern side of it.[1] After the conquest of Nepal he compelled the Nepalese king to give his daughter in marriage with him and he did the very same thing in respect of the Chinese Emperor as well.[2] From the aforesaid sources it appears that the Nepalese princess was Bhṛikuṭi, daughter of Aṁśuvarman. It is evident also from the Tibetan Buddhist sources as also from the legends associated with the name of that monarch that the Chinese princess was Wen-cheng, whose Tibetan form of the name was Mun-sen-kon-co, daughter of the Chinese emperor T'ai-tsung (627–650 A.D.) of the T'ang dynasty. If within a few years of his accession that Tibetan king became virtually the ruler of Nepal, it is difficult to believe that Emperor Harsha had anything to do with that country since after about 629 A. D. he could not possibly be its ruler and from 606 A.D. onwards for about a quarter of a century he was extremely busy in consolidating his power in different parts of Northern India. To be explicit, in the earlier part of his reign it was impossible for that Indian monarch to think of incorporating Nepal into his empire and after 630 A.D. he was incapable of doing so because of the changed political

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[1] It is difficult to calculate the exact date of Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po, who, according to Tibetan tradition, enjoyed a prolonged reign. Regarding the date of his birth, Tibetan historians give various dates ranging between 600 and 617 A.D. (*J.A.S.B.*, Vol. i, Pt. I, 1881, pp. 217-22), but, according to Smith, the latter date seems to be correct (*Early History of India*, p. 376 n.l), and is accepted by M. de Milloué (*Bod-Youl on Tibet*, p.139). According to Petech, "It is established with certainty that Srong-tsan-sgam-po was born in 569 A.D. and reigned from 620 to 650 A.D." (*A Study on the Chronicles of Ladakh*, pp. 47-48 published as supplement to *I.H.Q.* xv); Thomas fixes his reign between 600-650 A.D.

(*Literary Text*, p. 49); Francke believes that the Chinese date for the king is 600-650 A.D. (*The Chronicles of Ladakh*)–Tr. in *Antiquities of Tibet*, ii, pp. 82-84; Lévi also places his death in 650 A.D. (*Le Nepal*, ii, p. 173). Smith assigns him the date 629-698 A.D. (*Early History of India*, p. 375), Majumdar however believes that he ruled between 581 and 6 0 A.D. (*Classical Age*, p. 73). It is not possible to accept the theory that it terminated in year 650 A.D. in view of the assistance which the Chinese envoy Wang-hiuen-tse had received from him in 650 A.D. and even after in various ways.

[1] C.f. Lévi, *Le Nepal*, ii, pp.148,174; Temple, *I.A.*, 1916, p.39. Tibetan occupation of the northern parts of Bihar, Bengal and Assam seems to have taken place following the death of Harsha and Bhāskaravarman.

[2] According to Smith, he married the Chinese princess in 641 A.D. (*Early History of India*, p. 381) and between 628 and 631 A.D., according to M. de Milloué (*Bod-Youl on Tibet*, p. 164).

condition in that country. We are, thus, led to believe that king Aṁśuvarman, who in our opinion, ruled from about 625 to 655 A.D., was a feudatory of Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po rather than of Harsha, a fact which cannot be controverted in the face of positive evidence coming from the later Tibetan Buddhist sources. It may be mentioned here that in this historical deduction of ours we have not taken into consideration the political significance of the title *Mahāsāmanta* which was borne by Aṁśuvarman, because of the fact that many independent rulers, like for instance Śaśāṅka, had adopted that title although they were not subservient to any contemporary suzerain. The same remark also holds good in respect of the title *Mahāsenāpati* during this period, which was borne, as we know, by a Yaudheya ruler although he was ruling independently, as it appears from his own records.[1]

From what we have seen above, it will appear that there was no possibility for Emperor Harshavardhana to rule over Nepal even for a few years during his reign. The currency of the Harsha era in Nepal was undoubtedly due to the cultural intercourse between that country and the Ganges valley which was greatly facilitated by the fact that the peoples living on either side of the Nepalese terrain belonged to the same ethnic and cultural group.

Whatever information is available from literary sources, it appears that Harsha exercised political supremacy over portions of North-western and Western India as he did in Eastern India. We have now to examine whether those areas were directly ruled over by him or with the help of his vassal chiefs. During the reign of his father, Prabhākaravardhana, the kingdom of Sthāneśvara was extending up to the River Śatadru in the North-west and comprised, so far as the evidence goes, the provinces of Sindhu and Maru in the West.[2] But just before the death of his father, his elder brother, Rājyavardhana, had succeeded in retarding the advance of the Hūṇas towards the East and, we believe, in extending the frontiers of the ancestral territory of the Pushpabhūtis as far as the River Vipāśa, in view of certain facts specifically mentioned in the itinerary of Hsuan Chuang. Our presumption is, however, that on that occasion the Crown-Prince had also succeeded in annexing the small strip of land lying between the Vipāśa and the Airāvatī so as to make the North-western frontier of his father's kingdom more secure because the former river would not serve the defensive purposes so well as the latter. From the military or strategic point of view, such an encroachment was a necessity, although for paucity of evidence it must remain a matter of conjecture.

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[1] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 252.
[2] *H.C.*, p. 101.

Harsha does not seem to have cared to extend his effective rule in the North-west beyond the River Airāvatī though his influence, as we shall see below, extended over far off regions beyond that river in that direction. Taking into consideration the information supplied by Hsuan Chuang in this respect, it seems his rule in those regions embraced the territories of She-lan-ta-lo (Jālandhara), Ku-lu-to (Kulūta) country and the province of She-to-tu-lu (Śatadru), which might have been situated on the western side of the river of that name.[1] His political supremacy on the western side of the River Jamuna is further proved by the discovery of an inscribed seal bearing his name at Sonpat, near Panipat.[2] Similarly, in the West Mo-la-po (Western Mālava), A–tali, K'ita, Ānandapura, Wu-she-yen-na (Ujjain), Chih-chi-to (Jajhoti), Mo-hi-ssu-fa-lo-pu-lo (Maheśvarapura), and Po-li-ye-ta-lo (Bairat) also seem to have formed parts of Harsha's dominion. That the regions between the Ganges and the Vindhyas came under the suzerainty of Harsha is also confirmed by the fact that he marched through that part of the country without any obstruction when he rushed to the Vindhyas in search of his sister Rājyaśrī. Besides, we also know from other sources that Eastern Mālava had come under the rule of the Pushpabhūtis first by diplomacy and later by war.

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[1] C.f. Majumdar, *The Classical Age*, p. 111; Tripathi, *History of Kanauj*, p. 37.

[2] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 232.

Further West, Harsha had conquered Valabhī and brought it under his suzerainty by attacking it.[1]

In the West, therefore, all the regions lying between the Jamuna and the Narmadā up to Kathiawar came under the suzerainty of Harsha. Only Sindh and some parts of Maru were not included in his dominion. Some scholars believe that Bairat, Jajhoti and Ujjain were not included in the dominion of Harsha because they have been mentioned by Hsuan Chuang as being ruled by other kings. Po-li-ye-ta-lo, which is identified with modern Bairat, and Chih-chi-to identified with Jajhoti in the Bundelkhand region, so close to both Kānyakubja and Sthāneśvara, cannot be reasonably placed outside the domain of Harsha. There may have been some feudatory rulers at these places, but both the regions must have certainly formed part of the Pushpabhūti suzerainty during the reign of Harsha. Ujjain also could not have been outside the pale of his dominion because we know that Eastern Mālava definitely came under the sovereignty of Harsha besides, of course, the Western.

Thus, we see that the empire of Harsha embraced almost the whole of Northern India from the Brahmputra in the East to Saurāshṭra and Kathiawar in the West and the Himalayas and the River Airāvatī in the North and North-west to the Narmadā and the Vindhyan ranges in the South.[2] In this connection, we may also note that even in the inscriptions of his Chālukyan adversary, Harsha has been styled *sakalottarāpathanātha*—the Lord of the whole *Uttarāpatha*. But, as already noticed above, towards the end of his reign, immediately after the death of Pulakeśin II, Harsha fulfilled his desire of *digvijaya* by penetrating his arms deep in the South along the coast up to Kāñchī through Koṅgoda and the Choḷa country. Similarly, in the Western Deccan he marched up to Kuntala. Our presumption, however, is, as stated above, that the South Indian campaigns of Harsha were not meant for annexing permanently his conquests in that region. Whether he actually intended it or not, his conquests in the Deccan did not help in the least towards the extension of his empire because his end came soon after his brilliant achievement. For all practical purposes, therefore, it was just an expedition and, we believe, that the Narmadā and the Vindhyan ranges really formed the southern limit of the empire of Harsha throughout his reign.

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[1] C.f. Smith, *Early History of India*, p.354; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 30. Sircar opines that the king of Valabhī was a subordinate ally of Harsha (*Proceedings of the All India Oriental Conference*, xii, p. 525). Ray also arrives at the same conclusion when he states, "so long as Harsha lived, the Valabhī king continued to rule as a subordinate ally. It was only after Harsha's death that Dhruvasena's successor Dharasena IV at once assumed imperial title and became *Mahārājādhirāja Chakravartin*" (*I.H.Q.*, iii, 1927, p. 777).

[2] C.f. Ettinghausen, *Harsha Vardhana*, p.43; Panikkar, *Śrī Harsha of Kanauj*, pp. 22, 27; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 43.

Harsha's Sphere Of Influence

Some historians are strongly of the opinion that Harsha's sphere of influence comprised territories which lay far beyond the limits of his own empire. The rulers of those kingdoms, though ordinarily independent, had voluntarily entered into subordinate alliance with the paramount sovereign of Northern India, apparently for their own safety. Those territories may, therefore, be considered to be in a way, 'Satellite States' which voluntarily remained attached to a powerful empire. It is really not a unique thing in the history of Ancient India, for a similar information has also come from the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta, in which Harisheṇa has specifically mentioned a number of tribal and monarchical States which had entered into subordinate alliance with Emperor Samudragupta, by making a voluntary request to him to rule over their respective territories and even succeeded in receiving a royal charter (*garutmadaṅka-svavishayabhukti-śāsana-yāchana*) containing a formal declaration of their protection from that Gupta Emperor.[1] If a similar thing had happened at the time of Harsha—and we believe it to be so—then we will have to make a critical study of Harsha's position in India in that context.

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[1] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 8.

Harsha's sphere of influence undoubtedly comprised Kāmarūpa, the present Brahmaputra valley, which was most certainly an independent State before his reign, as we know from the epigraphic records relating to the history of that kingdom. Bāṇa has very clearly stated that Bhāskaravarman, king of Kāmarūpa, sent a "confidential messenger", Haṁsavega, along with costly presents, to seek "an imperishable alliance" with the Pushpabhūti king.[1] As suggested above, the ruler of Kāmarūpa was perhaps eager for an alliance with the king of Sthāneśvara because the western frontiers of his kingdom were threatened by the growing power of the Gauḍas. The attitude of Bhāskaravarman is significant of the fact that he considered Harshavardhana to be a very powerful monarch who was strong enough to protect him against the aggression of the Gauḍas. On another occasion also the action of the Kāmarūpa king showed the awe and fear in which he held Harshavardhana. From an episode narrated in the *Life*, it appears that while Hsuan Chuang was staying at the court of Bhāskaravarman and Harsha wanted to meet the former, the latter refused to send the pilgrim, since he had not been for long with him. The king of Kāmarūpa, therefore, sent a message to Emperor Harsha in the following words : "He can take my head, but he cannot take the Master of the Law yet." The emperor was greatly enraged at the reply and the "coarse language" and wrote back: "Send the head, that I may have it immediately by my messenger who is to bring it here." Bāskaravarman was "deeply alarmed at the folly of his language" and himself along with his ministers rushed, accompanying the Chinese pilgrim, to explain his conduct to Harsha.[2] The relation of Bhāskaravarman with the paramount sovereign of Northern India, though of a subordinate type, remained entirely cordial ever since, for we know definitely that he took active part in the two religious festivals which were held by the latter at Kānyakubja and Prayāga in which the Chinese pilgrim was also present.

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[1] *H.C.*, p. 218.

[2] *Life*, p. 172.

From what we have stated above, it will be seen that although Harsha did not rule, either directly or indirectly, over the kingdom of Kāmarūpa, the ruler of that country, though independent, had voluntarily entered into a subordinate alliance with him, apparently for the security of his territory. The kingdom of Kāmarūpa, which was a sovereign State, should, therefore, be considered to have been included in Harsha's sphere of influence. In this connection Mookerji rightly observes : "The king of distant Kāmarūpa (Assam) offered him allegiance of his own accord and was anointed king by his liege lord, as stated by Bāṇa (*atra devena abhiṣiktah Kumārah*)."[1] "It was the army which made his power thus felt in the remotest parts of his empire."[2]

In North-western part of India also Harsha's sphere of influence extended over a considerable area far beyond the boundaries of his empire. According to the Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Chuang, there were three important kingdoms in that region during those days, viz., Ka-pi-shih (Kapiśa), Kashmir and Che-ka.[3] Of these, Kashmir was a large State, the ruler of which exercised sovereign sway over a number of principalities like Takshaśilā, Siṁhapura, Pan-nu-ts'o (Punch), Wu-la-shih (Uraśā or Uraksha) and Rājapura.[4] From a story narrated in the *Life*, it is apparent that Kashmir had been, in a way, forced to acknowledge the supremacy of Harsha. The story as recorded by the pilgrim is as follows : "In recent times Śīlāditya rājā, hearing that Kaśmira possessed a tooth of Buddha, coming in person to the chief frontier, asked permision to see and worship it. The congregation, from a feeling of sordid avarice, were unwilling to consent to this request and so took the relic and concealed it. But the king fearing the exalted character of Śīlāditya, set about digging here and there till he found the relic, and having found it, presented it to the king. Śīlāditya, seeing it, was overpowered with reverence, and exercising force, carried it off to pay it religious

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1. *Harsha*, p. 44.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
3. Watters, i, pp. 123, 259, 286.
4. *Ibid.*, i, pp. 240, 248, 256, 283, 284; Beal, i, pp. 136, 143, 147, 163.

offerings."[1] The manner in which the tooth-relic was brought away from Kashmir, leaves no room for doubt that its ruler did acknowledge the political supremacy of Harshavardhana and was prepared to carry out his orders to the best of his ability and power, more out of fear for him than for anything else. In this connection, we must not overlook the fact that both Harsha and Durlabhavardhana, the then ruler of Kashmir, were pious Buddhists; and since the former was far-famed for the sacrifices he had made for the development of Buddhism, the latter might have held him in great esteem and reverence for the same rather than in fear and suspicion because of the superiority of his military strength. Whatever the case may be, the inclusion of Kashmir and her dependencies, the four principalities mentioned above, in the sphere of influence of the Pushpabhūti emperor, appears to be an established fact.[2]

No other region in North-western India seems to have been under the influence of Harsha. We may, however, note here that the *Life* has mentioned that Harsha "wrote some letters on fine white cotton stuff and sealed them with red wax (or, composition), which he ordered the Ta-kwan officers to present in all the countries through which they conducted the Master, to the end that the princes of these countries might provide carriages or modes of conveyance to escort the Master even to the borders of China."[3] The request of the emperor was duly carried out by the kings through whose territories the pilgrim passed. For instance, the king of Kapiśa, besides providing all the facilities to Hsuan Chuang and holding a great assembly for bestowing charity (*Moksha-mahādāna*), himself accompanied the pilgrim up to the frontiers of his kingdom.[1] On the basis of this information Mookerji concludes that "Harsha's influence and fame extended all over Northern India and even up to the borders of china."[2] We believe that the message sent by the Pushpabhūti king was more in the nature of a request to the rulers of the neighbouring States than an order to them. Besides, the rulers of some of these States themselves were Buddhists by faith and, therefore, they entertained and provided all the facilities for the Chinese pilgrim. We, therefore, do not believe that all the States through which Hsuan Chuang passed during his return journey and who provided facilities to him came within the sphere of influence of Harsha. As many of those rulers were Buddhists by faith like Harsha, we believe that they maintained friendly alliance with him.

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[1] *Life*, p. 183; Watters, i, p. 279.

[2] C.f. Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 40. Vaidya is of opinion that the reference in the *Harshacharita* to "an inaccessible land of snowy mountains" from which Harsha took tribute (p. 100-01) refers to Kashmir. According to him, it was the king of that country who was "made to acknowledge the nominal suzerainty of Harsha and compelled to pay tribute as mentioned by Bāṇa" (*History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, i, p. 17). According to Ray, "we cannot deny that Kashmir had to bear, at least for once, the brunt of Harsha's invading army" (*I.H.Q.*, iii, 1927, p. 780). Later on he quotes the following verse from the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* to suggest that it alludes to Harsha's rule over Kashmir:

इदं स्वभेदविधुरं हर्षादीनां धराभुजां । कंचित् कालमभूद् भोज्यं ततः प्रभृति मण्डलम् ॥
(Ch. II, v. 7).

[3] *Life*, p. 190.

As for Western India, Sindh definitely came within Harsha's sphere of influence. We learn from Bāṇa's *Harsha-charita* that even during the reign of Prabhākaravardhana the Sindhu basin came within the sphere of his influence while Harsha himself "pounded a king of Sindha."[3] The unnamed ruler of that country, at the time of Hsuan Chuang's visit, was Śūdra by caste and Buddhist by faith. It is probably this very king who, according to Bāṇa, was defeated by Harsha. He is very probably Sāhasī Rāi who ruled in the first quarter of the 7th cent. A. D. and thus may be considered to be an exact contemporary of Harsha.

As for the Western part of Rajputana, although there is no definite evidence about its inclusion in the empire of Harsha, whether directly or indirectly, we cannot possibly exclude it from Harsha's sphere of influence, since geographically, it lies between his dominion and Sindh. We have, therefore, no hesitation in considering the Sindhu-Sauvīra region along with Western Rajputana to have been included within the sphere of influence of Harshavardhana.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 193; Watters, ii, p. 269.

[2] *Harsha*, p. 45.

[3] *H.C.*, pp. 101, 76.

From what we have stated above, it will be seen that Harsha ruled, both directly and indirectly, as a paramount sovereign from the farthest region of Assam in the East up to the Kirthar range bordering on Baluchistan in the West and from the Northernmost part of Kashmir up to the Narmadā in the South. We have already mentioned that all the kingdoms lying to the North of that river were included in the dominion of Harsha and were thus under his direct rule. Although in the later part of his reign he conquered certain portions of the Deccan, we do not think that they were permanently annexed to his empire. For all intents and purposes, therefore, the Narmadā and the Vindhyan range should be considered to be the southern boundaries of the Pushpabhūti empire during his reign.

Foreign Relations

A paramount sovereign like Harshavardhana is expected to have maintained diplomatic relations with more important contemporary rulers of Asia as was done by his illustrious predecessors like Chandragupta, Bindusāra, Aśoka and Samudragupta, all of whom enjoyed imperial dignity. Unfortunately, for paucity of evidence, it is difficult to say with how many such crowned heads of Asia he maintained diplomatic relations. Two Asian monarchs have been pointed out by historians with whom Harsha had come in contact. One of them is Emperor T'ai-tsung of China and the other Khusru II Parvez of Persia. With regard to Harsha's political alliance with the former we have undoubtedly some concrete literary evidence, but with regard to the latter it is merely a conjecture, since there is no positive evidence to support it. Regarding the emperor of China we are told that, in 641 A. D., Harsha sent a Brāhmaṇa envoy to his court. In return, his Chinese contemporary sent an ambassador named Liang-hoai-king, most probably at the instance of Hsuan Chuang who was at the court of Harsha when the envoy was dispatched from China. Ma-twan-lin has described the event in the following words: "(In 641) Śīlāditya assumed the title of king of Magadha and sent an ambassador with a letter to the emperor. The emperor in his turn, sent Liang-hoai-king as an envoy with a royal patent to Śīlāditya with an invitation to him to submit (to the authority of the Chinse emperor). Śīlāditya was full of astonishment and asked his officers whether any Chinese envoy ever came to this country since time immemorial. 'Never', they replied in one voice. Thereupon the king went out, received the imperial decree with bended knees, and placed it on his head."[1] The account of the Chinese writer is difinitely exaggerated and unrealistic. The courtesy and favour which the Indian emperor showed to the Chinese envoy has been interpreted by him as acts of submission. His account, therefore, in this respect is unworthy of any serious consideration and is entirely un-warranted. On the basis of this account, Ettinghausen has also suggested that Harsha was in some serious trouble and, therefore, he was compelled to seek the help of the emperor of China.[2] We fail to understand what help, if any, T'ai-tsung could give to Harsha from such a far off distance in those ancient times. The French scholar has made the mistake of believing too literally in the extremely exaggerated accounts of Ma-twan-lin in this respect.

In 643 A. D., a second Chinese embassy came under Li-yi-piao who was accompanied by another Chinese officer named Wang-hiuen-tse.[3] It appears that the Brāhmaṇa envoy who was previously sent by Harsha came back with the Chinese officials of the second mission. They reached Magadha after a journey of nine months. On the completion of their official mission they visited the Buddhist holy places such as

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1. *I.A.*, ix, p. 19 ff.
2. *Harsha Vardhana*, p. 54-57.
3. *I.A.*, ix, p. 20.
   Bagchi considers the embassy under Li-yi-piao to be the first Chinese mission sent by the Emperor of China in return for the one sent by Harsha. He has apparently overlooked the first Chinese embassy under Liang-hoai-king (*India and China*, p. 82).

Rājagṛiha, Gṛiddhakūṭa and Bodhagayā, and set up votive inscriptions in Chinese at the latter two places. They returned to China in 647 A. D.[1]

In the same year (647 A. D.), Wang-hiuen-tse, who had been the second-in-command of the aforesaid second mission, was entrusted with the third Chinese imperial mission to the court of Kānyakubja with an escort of thirty horsemen and Tsiang-Cheu-jenn as the second-in-command, in order that, as stated by Ma-twan-lin, "the principles of humanity and justice which had been diffused in that country should have a protector and representative there."[2] Unfortunately, before the mission reached Kānyakubja, She-lo-ye-to or King Śīlāditya had died. The subsequent history of the second mission of Wang-hiuen-tse has been dealt with by us separately below.

A Persian historian, Ṭabari (838-923 A.D.), has preserved an account that the king of India named 'Pramesha' sent an envoy to the Persian King Khusrū II Parvez (609-628 A.D.) in the 36th year of the latter's reign (i.e., about 625-26 A.D.). In this connection, the Muslim historian further informs us that the Indian monarch sent him and to his sons costly presents and letters for all of them.[3] It has been suggested on

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1. *I.A.*, ix, p. 20.
2. *J.R.A.S.*, vi (1837), p. 69.
   There is not the slightest indication in the annals of the T'ang period that the officials constituting the two previous missions sent by Tai-tsung were shown discourtesy in any way when they came to India. They must have been well received by the Indians and also by the North Indian Emperor, Harsha, at whose instance they had come to this country. There is, thus, no scope for discourtesy or ungenerous treatment for them, particularly in India, which was so famous for its hospitality to all outsiders. The remarks of Ma-twan-lin are, therefore, unjustifiable and we consider it to be a glaring instance of historical impertinence. The clash between the armies of the usurper Arjuna and the Chinese contingent under Wang-hiuen-tse somewhere in Tirhut near the border of Nepal, is to be viewed, however, entirely from a different perspective. We have fully discussed the significance of this historical event separately elsewhere.
3. Yazdani, *Ajanta*, i, pp. 46-9; Sastri, K.A.N., *Foreign Notices of South India*, p. 9.

the basis of this evidence that the Indian king was either Pulakeśin II or Harshavardhana.

The identification of the Indian king referred to by the Muslim writer, as mentioned above, with Pulakeśin II, was first proposed by Fergusson which was accepted by many scholars.[1] His identification is based mainly on the evidence of the aforesaid Persian Chronicle and some paintings in Cave I at Ajanta. Ettinghausen, however, did not accept the identity proposed by Fergusson.[2] Majumdar goes a step further in contradicting the theory of Fergusson with cogent arguments. In his opinion, the Indian monarch may have been Harsha, but certainly not Pulakeśin II.[3] His theory is based mainly on the following historical and geographical facts:

"In the first place, the geographical considerations favour this hypothesis, Harshavardhana's empire being closer to Persia, and there being an old and frequented route between the two countries.........

"Secondly, we have actual references to intercourse between Harsha's kingdom and Persia. For, according to Bāṇabhaṭṭa, Harsha's horses were brought from Persia,[4] among other countries."

"Reference may be made in this connection to the statement of Lama Taranath, the Tibetan historian, that a Persian king presented horses to the king of Madhyadeśa and the latter sent in return a few elephants"[5].........

"Thirdly, it is quite clear from some expressions used by Bāṇabhaṭṭa that the conquest of Persia was not regarded by Harsha's chiefs as beyond the range of practical politics. For among the bravadoes uttered by them we meet with the following: 'The land of the Turuṣkas is to the brave but a cubit. Persia is only a span.' "[6]

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1. *J.R.A.S.*, 1879, p. 165 ff.
2. *Harsha Vardhana*, p. 53.
3. *J.I.H.*, iv, pt. ii, pp. 32-33.
4. *Vide*, *H.C.*, p. 50.
5. Cf. *Tāranātha*, tr. by Schiefner, p. 94.
6. *H.C.*, p. 210.

'Lastly, the Persian king refers to the Indian monarch as the king of India'. As Persia and Western countries in general were more intimately associated with Northern India, the term 'king of India' could hardly apply to one who did not rule in the north."

We have set forth in detail the views of different scholars relating to the Ajanta fresco paintings in question, along with the different lines of evidence cited by them. The date of Cave I at Ajanta, in the opinion of Percy Brown, is c. 600-625 A.D.[1] His suggestion is based mainly on the architecture of the cave and the sculptures to be found therein. A later date may be fixed for the paintings decorating it, since excavations of such large caves involved much labour and time. While we accept the date as suggested for it by the aforesaid scholar, in our opinion the paintings decorating it may be assigned roughly to the period extending from 640-50 A.D. Now with regard to the question whether the Indian monarch depicted in the scene referred to above is Pulakeśin II or Harsha, it is extremely difficult to give any definite answer for the simple reason that while Ajanta is situated in the country that was previously ruled over by that Chālukyan monarch, Harsha was undoubtedly more renowned of the two and in fact was in touch with his famous contemporaries on the frontiers of his empire and even beyond. There was an uninterrupted intercourse between India and Iran since the time of the Achaemenids which again considerably developed since the time of the Sassanian emperor Shapur I. Thus, there can be no wonder if Bāṇa in his work has referred cryptically to Persia. While it is difficult for us to say definitely whether Pulakeśin II or Harsha has been depicted in the painting in question, it seems to us that the probability is more in favour of the latter than of the former. The ancestors of the modern Parsis, mentioned in literature as Pārasīkas, were already settled in the first half of the 7th cent. A.D. on the western coast of India; and the Ajanta artists, as it appears, knew something about their country, their manners and customs, and even of their rulers by coming into closer or direct contact with them. They, therefore, deliberately inserted a few Iranian scenes, though irrelevant, probably with the intention of breaking the dull monotony of representing purely Indian manners and customs, as also religious beliefs and practices. We may take here the liberty of pointing to a historical fact for the consideration of scholars and that is, at the time when Cave I at Ajanta was decorated with frescoe paintings (c. 640-50 A.D), the reign of Pulakeśin II had not only terminated but the Chālukyan kingdom also was in the grip of anarchy and political disorder for a long time which factor certainly does not justify us in identifying the Indian king in the scene in question with that Chālukyan monarch.[1]

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[1] *Indian Architecture*, i, p. 69.

The Death of Harsha and the Disintegration of the Pushpabhūti Empire

Death of Harsha and the Second Mission of Wang-hiuen-tse[2]

When Wang-hiuen-tse reached India at the head of the third Chinese mission to the court of Harsha, he learnt that the great emperor was already dead. We do not know the exact date or the circumstances of his death, but, according to the Chinese sources, it must have taken place either during the later part of 646 A.D. or in the beginning of 647 A.D. when the Chinese mission was in India.[3] Most probably

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1. C.f. Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 241.
2. Wang-hiuen-tse had written a memoir of his travels in India. This book, named *Chung-Tien-chu King Ki* (Account of Journeys to Middle India) is lost, but extracts from it are preserved in a work entitled *Fa-iuen-chu-lin*, an encyclopaedia of Buddhism, compiled by Tao-chen in 668 A.D. (Lévi, *Journal Asiatique*, 1900, p. 297 ff). Unfortunately, none of these extracts refers to his second embassy with which we are concerned here. The most authentic account of Wang-hiuen-tse's second embassy is furnished by the History of the T'ang Dynasty in its two versions, 'Old' and 'New', composed respectively in 897-946 A.D. and 1060 A.D. The relevant extracts are translated in French by Lévi (*J.A.*, 1900, p. 306 ff.) and in English by Waddell (*The Imperial Asiatic Quarterly Review*, 1911, p. 37 ff).
3. According to the *Life* (p. 156), however, Harsha died "towards the end of the Yung Hwei period (*i.e.*, about 654-55 A.D.)." Takakusu also confirms this date (I-tsing, vi, p. 263). Watters is of opinion that

he left no son to succeed him. It is an irony of fate that, in spite of having so many sources of information throwing light on the history of Harsha, we do not know who his queen was or how many sons or even daughters he had except the one who was married to the king of Valabhī. Had he left a son to succeed him, the name of his queen would certainly have come for mention in the epigraphic records of his successor.

After the death of Harsha, Northern India was plunged into disorder and anarchy. To add fuel to the fire, the political confusion synchronised with a severe famine and this further helped in the dismemberment of the Pushpabhūti empire which was in its full glory during the reign of Harsha.[1] As a result, not only the far off regions of his empire became independent of Kānyakubja, but the capital itself perhaps witnessed some serious disturbances. We learn from Ma-twan-lin that when Wang-hiuen-tse visited India for the second time at the head of the third Chinese mission, as already stated above, he found that the Indian monarch, whom he came to meet, was already dead and his minister A-la-na-shuen (Arjuna or Aruṇāśva), the king of Ti-na-fu-ti, (Tīrabhukti) had usurped the throne.[2] It appears, from the statement of the Chinese encyclopaedist, that the second mission of Wang-hiuen-tse was a failure, since he and his companions were so badly treated that he took to flight for his own safety, under cover of darkness at night, and ultimately reached Tibet (T'u-fan), the king of which country maintained friendly relations with the rulers of both Nepal and China. A few months later, to

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"the date 648, or rather 647, is perhaps the correct one. It must have been in 641 or 642 that, in conversation with our pilgrim, Śīlāditya stated that he had then been sovereign for above thirty years. This also gives 612 for the year of his accession, and the addition of six years to the thirty gives 648 A.D. as the date of his death. But the Chinese envoy dispatched in the early part of that year found, on his arrival in the country, the king dead, and a usurper on the throne. Moreover, it was in 648 that Hsuan Chuang submitted his records to Tai tung, and Śīlāditya must have been dead before this work was drawn up in its present form" (Watters, i, p. 347).

[1] *I.A.*, ix, p. 20; *J.A.S.B.*, vi (1837), pp. 61-75.

[2] *Ibid.*

avenge the insult perpetrated on him directly, and his overlord, Emperor T'ai-tsung indirectly, he advanced as far as Cha-puo-ho-lo, the capital of Mid-India, and captured it after a siege of three days with the help of an army which was composed of 7,000 Nepalese cavalry and 12,000 Tibetan infantry. "The carnage was terrible. Three thousand of the besieged were beheaded and ten thousand were drowned." The defeated Indian king fled from the battle-field but, gathering his scattered forces, reappeared to punish the Chinese invader. A second battle was fought at a different place the locality of which has not been mentioned in the account of Ma-twan-lin but it has been specifically stated in it that the usurper was successfully defeated and was caught while one thousand of his troops were beheaded. The guards of the royal *harem* opposed the enemy's passage of the river K'ien-t'o-wei, but they were defeated. From the same source it further appears that the casualty on the side of the Indian army was rather heavy. Arjuna was subsequently taken to China via Nepal and Tibet as a war-prisoner and presented before Emperor T'ai-tsung for adequate punishment for being solely responsible for the loss of so many lives. By the order of the emperor of China the captive was cast into prison, where he remained till his death.[1] According to our computation, Arjuna was taken to China as a prisoner of war towards the end of 648 A. D., he being defeated sometime in the earlier part of that year.[2]

The observations of Ma-twan-lin relating to the second mission of Wang-hiuen-tse are far too exaggerated and are unacceptable to sober history. The Chinese encyclopaedist, at one breath, describes Arjuna as a minister of the deceased Śīlāditya, who usurped the throne, and also as a local ruler of Tīrabhukti. The fight between the Indian and the Chinese army took place somewhere at the foothills of Nepal and not near Kānyakubja where that minister should have been

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1. *I. A.*, ix, p. 20.
2. Pelliot also quotes a passage from the *Old History of the T'ang Dynasty* according to which Wang-hiuen-tse conquered Ti-ni-ju-ti on June 16, 648 A.D. (*T'oung Pao*, 1812, pp. 352-53, n. 2).

expected, had he really usurped the throne. It would indeed be a strange coincidence if Arjuna's army was actually present near some Nepali mountain passes, when Wang-hiuen-tse, with a handful of Chinese escorts, descended from Nepal into the plains of Northern India. It is really strange that each and every single item of information supplied by Ma-twan-lin in this connection is open to criticism. We are only prepared to believe that Arjuna was a local ruler of Tīrabhukti whose army had clashed with the escorts of the Chinese envoy who, being defeated, sought shelter in Tibet and subsequently in order to avenge the insult perpetrated on him, again came to Tīrabhukti and, with the assistance of a cavalry regiment composed mainly of the Nepalese and the Tibetans, defeated the so-called usurper Arjuna, made him a war-captive and took him away to the Chinese imperial capital where, by the order of Emperor T'ai-tsung, he was cast into prison. We are also prepared to believe that Arjuna remained there as a prisoner till his death. Leaving aside these few facts, whatever else has come to be recorded about him in the work of Ma-twan-lin is absolutely baseless and is marked by a tendency to glorify the military achievements of the Chinese envoy. We do not consider Arjuna to be either a minister of Harsha or one who had usurped the throne of Kānyakubja after his death. We can consider him only to be one of the feudatory chiefs of Harsha and nothing more than that. In this connection, the remarks of Majumdar are worthy of consideration. "It was indeed" says he, "a great marvel ! With only eight thousand soldiers, borrowed from two neighbouring states, Wang-hiuen-tse, far from his home, defied the great king who sat on Harsha's throne, fought a series of battles, and won an easy and complete victory in each, killing 13,000 and imprisoning 12,000 over and above a large unspecified number. He captured the enemy's capital city only after three days' siege, and 580 walled towns submitted to him, evidently out of fear, though his force consisted mainly of cavalry. And all these, including a return journey to China, were accomplished in the course of a year or a little more. Such marvels do not often or easily happen, and one might justly feel sceptical about the whole affair. In any case, it is impossible to draw any reliable conclusion from this picture of an invincible hero painted by himself."[1]

A relevant question that may be asked here in this connection is : why was the party accompanying Wang-hiuen-tse attacked by the army of Arjuna ? Since no information is available on this subject in the work of that great Chinese encyclopaedist, mentioned above, no definite answer can possibly be given. The sudden appearance of so many Chinese cavalry soldiers, fully equipped with arms, in Tīrabhukti, must have aroused suspicion in the mind of its ruler as to their real intention in coming there, without previous information or permission. The army of Arjuna, therefore, attacked the party and succeeded in taking most of the Chinese soldiers into custody; a few of them, including Wang-hiuen-tse, the leader of the mission, managed to escape under the cover of darkness into the Tibetan territory. There was, thus, nothing unusual in the action taken by the men of Arjuna and there was no question of insulting the Chinese envoy. But it was considered to be a matter of great indignation by the Chinese who were determined to retaliate with the help of the rulers of Tibet and Nepal who were on friendly terms with the Chinese emperor. A matter which could have been settled through diplomatic negotiations, thus led to a war purely due to the vanity of the envoy who was not prepared, as it appears, to recognise the responsibility of a ruler, whatever might have been his status, for the maintenance of law and order in his own State. We thus consider it to be a mistake on the part of the Chinese envoy to bring armed escort into this country which was the main cause of the trouble. Wang-hiuen-tse, though an experienced Chinese official, had completely failed to realise the spirit of the mission for which it had been sent from China, and thus turned a justifiable act into an unfriendly one and thereby disturbed India's cordial relations with China.[1]

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[1] *The Classical Age*, p. 125. There are a number of variations and discrepancies in detail between the 'Old' and 'New' versions of the *History of the T'ang Dynasty*. The figures quoted by Majumdar are from the 'New' version.

Disintegration of the Pushpabhūti Empire

All available sources of information clearly point to the dismemberment of the Pushpabhūti empire immediately after the death of Harsha. This was partly accentuated by the fact that the deceased emperor did not leave any male issue to succeed him, as observed earlier. He had probably only one daughter and she was married to King Dhruvabhaṭa of Valabhī, as stated above. What happened in Northern India on the death of Harsha is perfectly in consonance with a story recorded in the *Life* of Hsuan Chuang. We are told in this Chinese work that while Hsuan Chuang was in Yashṭivana Vihāra, a few years before his departure for China, he saw in a dream "all the chambers and courts of the Nālandā monastery deserted and foul; moreover, there were nought but water buffaloes fastened in them, with no priests or followers. The Master of the Law entering through the Western gate of the hall of Bālādityarāja, beheld on the top of the four-storeyed pavilion a golden-coloured man, of a grave and imposing countenance, whilst a glorious light shone within the entire abode. His mind was overjoyed, and he wished to ascend to the top, but he found no way to do so; he then besought him to reach down and lift him up—but he replied: 'I am Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva; your *karma* does not yet admit of (*such a privilege*)' and then pointing to the outside of the convent, he said: 'Do you see that ?' The Master of the Law, looking in the direction indicated by his finger, saw a fierce fire burning without convent, and consuming to ashes villages and towns. Then the golden figure said: 'You should return soon, for after ten years Śīlāditya rāja will be dead, and India be laid waste and in rebellion, wicked men will slaughter one another; remember these words of mine !' After he had finished, he disappeared."[2] In sober history, no reliance can be placed on such stories; but oddly enough, the dream of the pilgrim somehow came to be true and the words of that golden figure verily bespeak the actual conditions of Northern India after the death of Emperor Śilāditya. Since there was no paramount sovereign to succeed him, there was no question of loyalty on the part of the kings, princes, and chiefs who formerly professed allegiance to him. Naturally, therefore, they assumed the sole responsibility of controlling the political affairs of their respective territories, each of which began to function independently as a sovereign State. We do not think that a chaotic condition prevailed immediately after the death of Harsha though it did sometimes happen after the downfall of great powers like those of the Mauryas, the Kushāṇas, and the Guptas. Leaving aside the question of Kāśmīra and its dependencies, Nepal in the North, Kāmarūpa in the East and Sindha in the West, which, as mentioned above, were included in Harsha's sphere of influence, the Pushpabhūti empire proper, which extended from the River Airāvatī and the Sindhu in the West to the River Brahmaputra in the East, the kingdoms that became independent were very few in number. It is true, however, that in the absence of numismatic and epigraphic data, it has not been possible for historians to form exactly an idea of the number of States which had become independent and their extent. It has also not been possible for them to ascertain, whether the rulers of those independent States were fighting amongst themselves for reducing others into vassalage, which was undoubtedly the character of the previous political upheavals following the downfall of an empire in this country. If there were any such attempts, history has disdained to record. It would, therefore, not be proper for us to speculate upon a thing about which we know little or nothing, and we will have to satisfy ourselves with the barest facts which have come to our knowledge, with the help of epigraphy and numismatics, the two other main sources for the history of this period.

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[1] For a critical discussion on the historical character of the incident, see *J.A.S.B.* (Letters), xix (1953), p. 40 ff.

[2] *Life*, pp. 154-55.

The kingdoms that regained independence after the downfall of the Pushpabhūti empire, which was undoubtedly synchronous with the death of Emperor Harsha, were Magadha, Kānyakubja, Karṇasuvarṇa and Valabhī. In addition to these, one more State in the West regained independence and that was the kingdom of the Gurjaras. Although it was a small and insignificant territory about that time, it was destined to play an important part in the political history of India in the subsequent centuries. The kingdom of Magadha became independent under Ādityasena who synchronised his accession by assuming the imperialistic title *Mahārājādhirāja*. Kānyakubja became independent under a Maukhari ruler, probably Suchandra or Suchandravarman, whose name has been recovered fortunately with the help of epigraphy.[1] The kingdom of Karṇasuvarṇa began to function independently but, in the present state of our knowledge, it is difficult to ascertain the name of its ruler through whom it regained its independence. We, however, presume that he was a scion of the line of Śaśāṅka. So far as Valabhī is concerned, we have no dearth of information in view of the facts gathered from the inscriptions of the successor of Dhruvabhaṭa, son-in-law of Harsha. The same is true also of the Gurjaras, since we find detailed information about their activities in their epigraphic records. Strictly speaking, we do not know anything about the trans-Jamuna region stretching as far as the River Airāvatī and the Sindhu, which was undoubtedly included in the empire of Harsha. It might have been ruled over by a certain king of some unknown family, and, it appears, there is no possibility of recovering its history. It is equally difficult for us to guess as to what had happened to Eastern or Western Mālavas and other areas to the North of the Narbada, which were previously included in the Pushpabhūti empire. Whether they were merged in the three principal kingdoms of Magadha, Kānyakubja and Valabhī is indeed difficult to guess. One fact about them, however, is certain ; it was during this period that the Chedis, who later played a prominent part in the history of Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand, were gradually coming into prominence. If there were other States, big or small, we have no information and, as such, have to delineate the picture of the political history of the post-Harsha period with the help of the material available from inscriptions and coins. The history of the States which had achieved their independence, has been dealt with separately elsewhere.

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[1] *E.I.*, xxiv, p. 283.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAUKHARIS OF KĀNYAKUBJA

Origin and Early History of the Maukharis

The period under review witnesses the downfall of the more famous Maukhari House of Northern India. The origin of the Maukharis and their early history are still wrapped up in a shroud of mystery; we do not know its exact relation with the other notable Maukhari family which ruled in the Gaya district between C. 528 and 575 A. D., as attested to by the palaeography of certain votive inscriptions belonging to a ruler of that house and found in the Barabar and Nagarjuni hills.[1] The existence in the pre-Gupta period of a large number of republican communities in the Ganges valley has been well attested by literary and epigraphic evidence, and it is possible that the Maukharis were one of them. A detailed list of those autonomous tribes, however, cannot be prepared for paucity of information; and, as such, we shall have to fill up gaps by availing not merely the early but also the later evidence relating to them. Taking everything into consideration, it appears that the different Maukhari families were originally one which, later on, divided itself at least into two sections.[2] As stated above, one of the two Maukhari families ruled in South Bihar possibly with Gaya as its headquarters while the other one ruled over a considerable portion of the Gaṅgā Jamuna Doab with Kānyakubja as its seat of government. Both the sections must have asserted their independence in the 3rd cent. A. D. when the vast Kushāṇa Empire crumbled into pieces, but could not retain it for long owing to the imperialistic policy steadily pursued by another neighbouring power—the Guptas. The absence of any reference to the Maukharis in the *Purāṇas* as also in the inscriptions of the early Gupta emperors, are positive proofs of their political insignificance, like so many other tribes of Northern India of which the Varikas, the Kulūtas, and the Kuṇindas or Kulindas are the most typical examples. Their existence in the pre-Gupta period is, however, proved by certain incidental references relating to them in literature and inscriptions or by certain stray seals and coins.[1] That the Maukharis had exist-

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[1] *C.I.I.*, III, Ins. Nos. 48, 49, 50.

Some scholars have, however, suggested other dates, e.g., Cunningham places them in the 4th cent. A.D. (*A.S.I.R.*, iii, p. 137); Pires fixes their period of rule in the first half of the 5th cent. A.D. (*The Maukharis*, p. 16); Indraji and Bühler suggest 5th cent. A.D. as the period of their reign (*I.A.*, xi, p. 428); Kielhorn is of opinion that they ruled not later than the first half of the 6th cent. A.D. (*E.I.*, vi, p. 3); Vaidya assigns them to a date later than that of Harsha (*H.M.H.I.*, i, p. 34).

[2] There may, probably, have been another line and that is of Mayūraśarman mentioned in the Chandravalli Inscription (*Archaeological Survey of Mysore, Annual Report*, 1929, p. 50). With the available data, however, we cannot say definitely whether it was a separate section or merely an offshoot of the Maukhari House of Gaya. Pires suggests

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three sections by including the line of kings mentioned in the *Kaumudīmahotsava.* He is of opinion that "the name of *varman* evidently was not a mere honorific suffix but a family name" (*The Maukharis*, p. 17). But there is no evidence to show that the two kings, mentioned in *Kaumudīmahotsava* with 'Varman' as a part of their names, were Maukharis. Family appellation 'Varman' is not special to the Maukharis alone, as Pires thinks; for example, Susthitavarman and Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa, Aṁśuvarman of Nepal, and Mādhavavarman of Orissa, too, have the same appellation.

1. *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 253. Ins. No. 59 (Bijayagadh Stone Pillar Inscription of Vishṇuvardhana).

The Kulūtas were the ancient inhabitants of the Kulu valley in the Kangra District of the Punjab. The earliest literary reference to the Kulūtas is in Varāhamihira's *Bṛihat-saṁhitā* (xiv, 22, 29) where they appear in the list of the peoples of the North-Eastern Division. Hsuan Chuang visited them in the second quarter of the 7th century A.D. Sometimes earlier, the author of the *Mudrārākshasa* mentions them as *Mlechchhas* or foreigners in similar company to Varāhamihira. All available information about them has been collected by Rapson in *J.R.A.S.*, 1900, p. 530 ff.

The Kuṇindas occupied a narrow strip of land at the foot of the Siwalik hills between the Jamuna and the Sutlej and the territory between the upper courses of the Beas and Sutlej, as is indicated by the distribution of their coins (Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India*, p. ci). This agrees very well with the few literary references to that ed long before the time of Guptas, is proved by their own seal bearing the legend *Mokhaliṇam* written in later Mauryan characters (early 2nd cent. B. C.[1]). This seal inscription not only points to the high antiquity of the Maukharis as a tribe but also suggests that, like the Lichchhavis and others, they were a political community enjoying democratic form of government in the early period of their history, which has been styled *Gaṇarājya* in Sanskrit literature. Again, like the other autonomous tribes of Northern India mentioned in early Buddhist and Jain texts, there must have been a change in their political constitution in the later period of their history, for in the later Gupta period, it is certain that they were enjoying a full-fledged monarchical form of government.

Origin of the Name Maukhari

Regarding the name Maukhari, it may be noted here that in the epigraphical records of the Maukharis themselves as well as in the works of Bāṇa, we come across two forms viz., *Mukhara* and *Maukhari*, both of which have been used indiscriminately. Thus, Bāṇa, in his *Harshacharita*, mentions the royal house of the Maukharis of Kānyakubja as the Mukharas while in his *Kādambarī* he has referred to the members of the same royal family as "the crowned Maukharis."[2] In the Barabar Hill Cave Inscription, King Anantavarman refers to his family as *Maukharīṇāṁ kulam*, i.e., "the family of the Maukharis", and the name 'Maukhari' also occurs in the Aphsad Stone Inscription of Ādityasena as also in the Asirgadh Seal Inscription of Śarvavarman.[3] The Maukhari royal

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tribe. In the *Bṛihat-saṁhitā*, Varāhamihira places the Kuṇindas in the North-eastern Division with the Kashmirians, the Kulūtas and the Sairindhas (xiv, 31, 33). The form *Kulinda* is found in the same source (iv, 24), in the *Vishṇu-Purāṇa*, and also in the *Mahābhārata*. In the last named work, the Kulindas have been placed in the region indicated by the provenance of their coins. The tribe was also known to Ptolemy who has mentioned their country as Kulindrine.

[1] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 14.

[2] *H.C.*, p. 122, 128, 246 (at one place in his *Harshacharita*, Bāṇa has also used the word *Maukhari*, p. 194); *Kādambarī*, p.l.

[3] *C.I.I.*, iii, pp. 222, 203, 220.

family has been referred to by Īśānavarman in his famous Haraha Stone Inscription, but there it has been specifically mentioned as the *Mukharas*.[1] It will be seen from these different uses in our sources that both *Maukhari* and *Maukhara* were equally popular as the name of that royal family during the 7th cent. A.D. But, in our opinion, the form *Maukhari* is the earlier of the two, since the clay seal referred to above clearly points to that fact. The *Prākṛit* form *Mokhaliṇam* occurring in that seal phonetically corresponds to Sanskrit *Maukhariṇām* and not to *Mukharāṇām*. The attempt of some scholars to find the name of the first member of the Mukhara royal house in the two popular designations of the family is unwarranted and unjustifiable.[2] If the founder of the family was known as Mukhara, as believed by them, then, grammatically, we should have *Maukhara* as the name of the family founded by him. Again, it is impossible to derive the name *Maukhari* from *Mukhara*, admitting it to be the name of its founder. We consider that both the names were unrestrictedly used in referring originally to the community and later on to the royal families connected with it. We must remember that the Mukharas or the Maukharis were originally an autonomous tribe as suggested by their earliest epigraphic record, the legend in the clay seal referred to above. Correct derivation of the name of any community belonging to ancient period is an utter impossibility, and, as such, we should not expect a sensible interpretation of the name Maukhari as well.

Caste of the Maukharis

The caste of the Maukharis is no less controversial than their origin. Modern historians are not unanimous in their opinion regarding their caste, and, in fact, it is difficult to say precisely to which particular section of the Hindu society they did belong. As stated above, the different Maukhari families were originally one; and since they managed their own political affairs like the other *Kshatriya* tribes of ancient India, there are good reasons to believe that they, too, might have considered themselves to be of *Kshatriya* extraction. In the cave inscriptions of Anantavarman, we find a strong corroboration of this fact. For instance, in his Barabar Hill Cave Inscription, that Maukhari king represents himself as "the lamp of the kshatriya family" (*dīpāḥ kshattra-kulasya*) and in one of his Nagarjuni Hill Cave Inscriptions he also describes himself as "the path of the abode of all the (noble) qualities of the kshatriyas" (*kshāttrasya dhāmnaḥ padaṁ*).[1] The Haraha Stone Inscription of Īśānavarman indirectly supports the tradition recorded in the aforesaid epigraphic records. The compiler of that inscription informs us that the Maukharis were the descendants of the hundred sons whom king Aśvapati obtained from Vaivasvata.[2] Reference to Vaivasvata may be taken to be an indication of the fact that the Maukharis of Kānyakubja considered themselves to belong to the Solar race, since Manu, whose other name was Vaivasvata, was of Solar lineage, and, as such, a true-born *kshatriya.*[3] We do not find any reference either in literature or in epigraphs which definitely contradicts the family tradition of the Maukharis—that they belonged to the *kshatriya* community.[4]

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[1] सुतशतं लेभे नृपोश्वपतिर्व्वैवस्वताद्यद्गुणोदितम् ।
तत्प्रसूता दुरितावृत्तिरुधो मुखराः क्षितीशाः क्षतारयः ॥
—*E.I.*, xiv, p. 115, v.3.

[2] Grammatically, it is possible to have the patronymic form *Maukhara* if the name of the founder of the family is *Mukhara*. It is not possible, however, to have a patronymic form like *Maukhari* from *Mukhara*, strictly on the basis of grammatical rules.

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1. दीपाः क्षत्त्रकुलस्य नैक-समर-व्यापार-शोभावतः...

—*C.I I.*, iii, p. 233.

क्षात्त्रस्य धाम्नः पदं......

—*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 227.

2. *E. I.*, xiv, p. 115, v. 3 (Tr., p. 119).
3. This is the opinion of Pt. Hiranand Sastri (*E.I.*, xiv, 119), the editor of the inscription. But some scholars, on the basis of the *Mahābhārata* (III, 296, 38 ff), identify Vaivasvata with Yama. The identification of Vaivasvata mentioned in the Haraha Stone Inscription has thus become a matter of controversy, but the tradition as preserved in the *Mahābhārata* clearly shows that the ancestors of King Aśvapati were of Solar origin.
4. Jayaswal, however, considers them to be *Vaiśyas.* "I think that the modern Mauhari caste, almost solely located in the Gaya District, are their representatives. They are Baniyas, i.e., Vaiśyas now" (letter

The controversy regarding their caste has actually arisen from a statement of Hsuan Chuang, that Emperor Śilāditya, i.e., Harshavardhana, was a *Vaiśya* by caste, which, in fact, has received some amount of support from a similar observation made in the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* regarding the founder of the royal house of the Pushpabhūtis.[1] Now the question is: how was it possible for the Maukhari king Grahavarman to marry in the royal family of the Pushpabhūtis and bring Rājyaśrī, a *Vaiśya* girl, as his first wife? In this context, it may be mentioned here that the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa does not directly or indirectly mention that the Pushpabhūtis belonged to the *Vaiśya* community; nor is there any epigraphical record of the period which lends support to that casual observation of Hsuan Chuang. Thus, the controversy which is raging round the caste of the Maukharis and that of the Pushpabhūtis is wholly based on what has been stated by that Chinese pilgrim, as mentioned above. Before we draw any conclusions regarding the caste of any one of these two royal families, there are certain facts of prime importance which we must very carefully consider. Grahavarman Maukhari married Rājyaśrī, the only daughter of Prabhākaravardhana, and there is no information available either in the *Harshacharita* or in the work of Hsuan Chuang to suggest that king Avantivarman had already established matrimonial alliance with one or more royal families of Northern India through him—the heir-apparent of the Maukhari throne. Intercaste marriage between the Hindu royal families in those

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quoted by Arvamuthan in '*The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*', p. 80, note 1). But in ancient times, persons belonging to a particular caste are known to have changed their professions for that prescribed for another caste. Pṛithvīsheṇa, the commander-in-chief of the army of Kumāragupta I, who was a Brahmin by birth, is a case to the point.

[1] Watters, i, p. 343; *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, p. 626.
सप्तमष्टशता त्रीणि श्रीकण्ठावासिनस्तदा ।
आदित्यनामा वैश्यास्तु स्थानमीश्वरवासिनः ॥
See also Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, p. 28. For our opinion regarding the historical value of the information about the caste of the Pushpabhūtis as preserved in these two works, see below.

days is an established fact; but it is difficult to believe that Grahavarman himslf preferred or was even permitted by his relations to have a *Vaiśya* girl as his first wife and the Chief Queen (*agramahishī*). According to Manu, a *Kshatriya* must have a *Kshatriya* girl as his first wife and afterwards he may lawfully marry a *Vaiśya* and even a *Śūdra* girl, if he so desires.[1] We are strongly of the opinion that the law formulated by Manu and supported by other legists of ancient India was rigid so far as the marriages in the royal families were concerned, and not flexible.[2] From the *Harshacharita* we get the impression that, after the death of Avantivarman, Grahavarman himself sent the proposal of his marriage to king Prabhākaravardhana, from which it appears that he was unmarried at the time when he ascended the throne. Again, it is most unlikely that a powerful king like Prabhākaravardhana would have condescended to give his only daughter in marriage with Grahavarman, if there was no possibility for her to become the Chief Queen. Since he was satisfied that his daughter would adorn the Maukhari royal family by being at first the Chief Queen and afterwards the mother of the future ruler of the Maukhari kingdom, he unhesitatingly entertained the proposal made by Grahavarman relating to his marriage with Rājyaśrī. If both Grahavarman and Rājyaśrī belonged to the *Kshatriya* caste, the marriage contracted between the two was regular and valid. But if that Maukhari king belonged to the *Kshatriya* caste and his wife belonged to that of the *Vaiśyas*, the marriage was unlawful, since it was not of the form prescribed by the ancient law-givers for bringing the first wife. Taking all these facts into consideration, we have come to the conclusion that the Pushpabhūtis were also *Kshatriyas* like the Maukharis, although we have no positive evidence to corroborate the same.

If both the royal families, viz., the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis, had not belonged to the *Kshatriya* community, the author of the *Harshacharita*, who is presumed to have witnessed

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1. *Manu*, vii, 77.
2. *Yājñavalkya*; lvii, 57.

the marriage of Rājyaśrī, would not have compared them with the Sun and the Moon.[1] It appears that, instead of using the stereotyped expression *Kshatriya*, he has told us that the rulers of those two families belonged to the purest *Kshatriya* stocks. If the Pushpabhūtis had been *Vaiśya* by caste, Bāṇa would not have made his position ridiculous by making a false suggestion regarding the nobility of their descent by instituting that comparison. He has definitely eulogised the lineages of both Prabhākaravardhana and Grahavarman though in a poetic manner, but without any hesitation or scruple as the expressions chosen by him signify.

Now coming to the question: if the Pushpabhūtis were *Kshatriyas*, how is it that Emperor Śīlāditya has been mentioned by Hsuan Chuang as belonging to the *Vaiśya* caste ?[2] We do not know what led the Chinese pilgrim to come to that conclusion or what was his authority for that statement. One fact is, however, certain, and that is : his remark could not have been based on the court tradition of the Pushpabhūtis; for no one is expected to talk with an outsider or a foreigner disparagingly about the king's caste, if it be a low one. This is of course the commonsense view of the problem confronting us here. There is, however, a point which we must not overlook in the present context. Emperor Harshavardhana was an orthodox Buddhist, and, as such, rightly or wrongly, he was considered by the *Brāhmaṇas* to be anti-Brahmanical in his thoughts and ideas. We believe that, getting no support or patronage from the emperor as much as was their expectation, some of the disgruntled *Brāhmaṇas* might have started a mischievous propaganda about his caste which Hsuan Chuang has recorded without taking the trouble of verifying it, thinking it probably to be imprudent on his part to do so.[1] Whatever the case may be, in the face of the contemporary and almost contemporary literary and epigraphic records, as mentioned above, it has not been possible for us to accept the statement of a foreigner that Emperor Śīlāditya was a *Vaiśya*, setting aside the popular belief or court tradition that both the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis were true-born *Kshatriyas.*[2]

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[1] ...त्वां प्राप्य चिरात्खलु राज्यश्रिया घटितौ तेजोमयौ सकलजगद्गीयमानबुधवर्णानन्दकारिगुणगणौ सोमसूर्यवंशाविव पुष्यभूतिमुखरवंशौ । —Text, p.146.
In this passage Bāṇa has simply made an allegorical statement, but some scholars like N.R.Ray (*Calcutta Review*, Feb., 1928, vol. XXVI, p. 203, n. 2) and Pires (*The Maukharis*, pp. 11, 12) have erroneously concluded that the comparison has been made because the two Houses in question were connected with the Sun and the Moon respectively. The hypothesis and the arguments of the two scholars, however, seem to be far-fetched. The purpose of Bāṇa was merely to eulogise the two *Kshatriya* families by comparing them with the two well-known *Kshatriya* houses that are famous both in Indian legends and history.

[2] Watters, i, p. 343.

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Later History of the Maukharis up to the Time of Avantivraman

During the 7th cent. A.D., there were at least three kings of the Maukhari family who had ruled in the Ganga-Jamuna *doab* with Kānyakubja as their seat of government They are Avantivarman, Grahavarman and another who has been referred to in the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* but unfortunately his full name does not occur there.[3] This non-descript successor of Grahavarman has also been mentioned for the second time in a seal inscription discovered recently at Nalanda.[1] Here too, owing to the damaged condition of the seal, only the first syllable of his name can be ascertained. The genealogy of the kings belonging to this Maukhari House as given in some inscriptions is as follows :—

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[1] The underlying idea is that the members of the third caste are not so charitable or generous as the upper two !

[2] The statment of the Chinese pilgrim, however, has received some corroboration from a Buddhist text, the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa,* as mentioned above, in which King Ādityavardhana, one of the ancestors of Harsha, has been definitely mentioned as of *Vaiśya* extraction. The problem relating to the caste of the Pushpabhūtis has thus become a matter of controversy. There can be no wonder if the Chinese pilgrim as well as the author of that Buddhist work have made that statement on the basis of the very same source of information and that is the Brahmanical theory relating to the origin of the Pushpabhūtis.

This controversy certainly would not have arisen, had there been any reference to the caste of the Pushpabhūtis or any other useful information about them in the Purāṇas, as we get, for instance, in the case of the Pushyamitras or the Muruṇḍas, from the same sources. There are many instances in the *Si-yu-ki* which go to show that Hsuan Chuang has accepted many such heresay statements, taking them to be genuine pieces of historical information.

[3] ततो विष्णुहरश्चैव कुन्तनामाजितः परः ।
ईशान सर्वंपङ्क्तिश्च ग्रहसुव्रत (अ)थापरः ॥
Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa, p. 626; see also Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India,* p. 27.

Mahārāja Harivarman
(m. Jayasvāminī)
|
Mahārāja Ādityavarman
(m. Harshaguptā)
|
Mahārāja Iśvaravarman
(m. Upaguptā)
|
Mahārājādhirāja Īśānavarman
(m. Lakshmīvatī)
|
Mahārājādhirāja Sarvavarman
(m. Indrabhaṭṭārikā)
|
Mahārājādhirāja Avantivarman
|
Mahārājādhirāja Su(...........)

During the decadent period of the history of the Imperial Guptas, that is to say, after the death of Budhagupta, a number of monarchical States had come into existence, of which the Maukhari kingdom of Kānyakubja was one.[2] During the early Gupta period, it is presumed that the rulers of the Maukhari House of Kānyakubja were merely vassal chiefs; but taking advantage of the weakness of the successors of Budhagupta, his feudatories re-established themselves in their former kingdoms as independent rulers. What is true of the Maukharis, is also true of many other dynasties, such as the Pushpabhūtis the Maitrakas, the Gauḍas and the Mālavas. Although Harivarman is the earliest known ruler of the Maukhari principality of Kānyakubja, it was Īśānavarman who brought his family into limelight by successfully waging wars against the neighbouring powers and annexing their territories, as we know from his famous Haraha Stone Inscription.[1] It is difficult to say exactly how far Īśānavarman was successful in his attempt to build up an empire in Northern India; but there is no doubt that the kingdom of the Maukharis extended as far as the Himalayas in the North, the Narmada in the South, the Jamuna in the West and the Ganga and the Brahmaputra to the East, when he had finished his career of conquests. It is true, however, that a portion of his vast kingdom was previously conquered by his father Īśvaravarman, particularly the south-west part of it, as evidenced by his Jaunpur Stone Inscription which specifically mentions that he, after defeating the Āndhras extended his conquest as far as the Raivataka Hill, which is to say, up to the very heart of Kathiawar.[2] Sarvavarman, the son and successor of Īśānavarman, was, however, not powerful enough to maintain the frontiers of the vast kingdom which was bequeathed to him by his father, since the available sources of information clearly point to the loss of the territories in the south and south-west and also perhaps, to a certain extent, in the east. The territories which came to be freed from the Maukhari yoke during his reign appear to be Mālava or eastern Mālava, Mo-la-po or western Mālava, and Gauḍa. That he ruled over a considerable portion of Shahabad district in South Bihar has been definitely established by an incidental reference to him in the Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jīvitagupta II;[3] but his Asirgadh Seal Inscription does not prove conclusively that he exercised sovereign sway over Central India, for a number of reasons. Īśānavarman's conquest of the Valabhī kingdom, or even a portion of it, is purely a matter of conjecture; and the same remark holds good in the case of Sarvavarman as well. In this connection, we should like to draw the attention of scholars to a fact of prime importance. Prabhākaravardhana, as described by Bāṇa, was "an axe to the Mālava creeper" and this may be taken to signify that he conquered Mālava, rather Eastern Mālava, which had previously been conquered by Īśānavarman in course of his campaigns in the regions lying to the north of the Narmada. Although there is no precise information in the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa, it appears that the relations between the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis were cordial, a fact which might have led Grahavarman Maukhari to send proposal of his marriage with the daughter of Prabhākaravardhana.[1] This, however, would not have been possible if Prabhākaravardhana had wrested a part of the Maukhari kingdom lying in the south. There was no question of hereditary feud between the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis, since whatever was conquered by Prabhākaravardhana in the south had already been lost in the reign of Sarvavarman. It is over this truncated Maukhari kingdom, with Kānyakubja as the seat of government, that Avantivarman and his two successors had ruled in the period under review.

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[1] *E.I.*, xxiv, pp. 284-285.
[2] During this period the Maukhari family of Gaya was already in existence.

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[1] *E.I.*, xiv, p. 110.

[2] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 228, No. 51.

[3] *C.I.I*, iii, p. 216, No. 46.

Avantivarman

With Avantivarman opens an eventful chapter in the history of Northern India; but, unfortunately, we do not know much about the life and political career of this Maukhari king for paucity of evidence. He has been undoubtedly mentioned by Bāṇa in his *Harshacharita* as the father of Grahavarman who became the son-in-law of Emperor Prabhākaravardhana.[2] Avantivarman has also been mentioned in a seal inscription discovered at Nalanda, which belongs to the reign of his son whose name, as given in it, is unfortunately very much mutilated and is beyond any possibility of restoration.[3] The Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jīvitagupta II also mentions Avantivarman by name, in connection with the worship of the God Varuṇavāsin and the recognition by that Maukhari king of all the land-grant charters which were previously issued from time to time by different local rulers for the worship of that deity.[1] In addition to these, we have got certain silver coins belonging to his reign, all of which were discovered in the central and western parts of Uttar Pradesh.[2] The information supplied by the aforesaid sources is most inadequate for the purpose of reconstructing the history of his reign. For instance, we do not know what was his exact relation with the preceding Maukhari king Sarvavarman, since the Nalanda Seal Inscription mentioned above is altogether silent about it. The same is true also of the *Harshacharita*, because its author has said nothing about him which is of any consequence in that context. His coins, however, throw some light on his date because, since the time of Īśānavarman, dated coins were issued by the Maukharis following the practice of the Imperial Guptas. The probability is, however, that he was the son of Sarvavarman and enjoyed throughout a peaceful reign. He was undoubtedly a very powerful king of his time, since in addition to the ancestral territory of the Maukharis, he exercised sovereign sway not only over the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh but even over a considerable portion of Bihar, as evidenced by the Deo-Baranark Inscription referred to above.[3] It is because of the vastness of his territory and the imperial dignity enjoyed by him[4] that Bāṇa had no hesitation in admitting that Avantivarman was the "pride of the Maukhara race" which, according to him, "stood at the head of all royal houses and was worshipped like Śiva's footprint, by all the world."[5] We do not consider what has been stated by that eminent writer to be purely eulogistic, since the power and glory of the Maukharis had reached their zenith not in the early but in the later part of their history. It must not be construed, however, that since Avantivarman died before the marriage of his son with Rājyaśrī, Bāṇa, out of respect for that deceased king, had used those choicest expressions in his own artistic way.

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[1] *H.C.*, pp. 122-3.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 122.
[3] *E.I.*, xxiv, p. 285.

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[1] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 216, No. 46.

[2] *J R.A.S.*, 1906, pp. 843-50.

[3] *C.I I.*, iii, p. 216, no. 46.

[4] This is signified by the use of "*Parameśvara*" for him in the Deo-Baranark Inscription (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 216).

[5] *H. C.*, p. 122.
धरणीधराणां च मूर्ध्नि स्थितो माहेश्वरः पादन्यास इव सकलभुवननमस्कृतो मौखरो वंशः...
—Text, p. 141.

We are not certain when Avantivarman died; but considering the fact that Grahavarman Maukhari was assassinated within a few years of his accession to the throne and marriage with the daughter of Prabhākaravardhana, it might have occurred in or about the year 602 A.D. The same uncertainty, it may be noted here, remains in respect of the date of his accession to the throne as also of the duration of his reign. His coins undoubtedly bear a date; but the numerical figures, being highly blurred, do not afford any material help towards the solution of all these historical problems.[1]

From Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* we learn that Avantivarman was a disciple of Bhātsu, a renowned ascetic-philosopher of that time. That eminent ascetic was also the spiritual guide (*guru*) of Bāṇa.[2] From this interesting piece of information we can only conclude that Avantivarman was a religious-minded king. He was probably also a patron of learning, since his feudatory Viśākhadatta, who composed the *Devīchandraguptam* and the *Mudrārākshasa*, has mentioned his name in the colophon of the latter work.[3] We, however, do not want to lay emphasis on this point since in certain editions of *Mudrārākshasa* other names figure in the same colophon, instead of 'Avantivarman.'[4]

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[1] The different readings of the dates on his coins are as follows :—

Burn—250, 57, 71.
Brown—250, 57, 70 (?).
Dikshit—260, 26x, 57, 17.

The year 250 seems to be a date according to the Gupta system of calculation (250+320=570 A.D.). This date is likely to fall in the reign of Avantivarman. See also Burn, *J.R.A.S.*, 1906, p. 849; Brown, *Catal. of Coins of the Guptas, Maukharis, etc. in the Luck. Mus.*, p. 39; Tripathi, *History of Kanauj*, p. 57; Pires, *The Maukharis*, p. 163.

[2] *Kādambarī*, p. 1.

[3] *Mudrārākshasa* (Nirnaya Sagar Press, 8th edition), Introduction, pp. 21, 317. See also *I.A.*, xliii, p. 67 and *J.R.A.S.*, 1900, p. 535.

[4] The other readings of the name are Chandragupta (*Mudrārākshasa*, p. 21; *I.A.*, xlii, p. 265 and li, p. 49) and Rantivarma (*Mūdrārākshasa*,

Grahavarman

The successor of Avantivarman was his son Grahavarman Maukhari.[1] It is very unfortunate that his name does not find mention in any of the epigraphs discovered so far [2] The

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p. 21; *I.A.*, xliii, p. 67); Dantivarma (*Mudrārākshasa*, ed. by Dhruva, K. H., p. vii).

In this connection we may draw the attention of our readers to the fact that *Mudrārākshasa* mentions the Hūṇas and the Kulūtas. The beginning of Hūṇa sovereignty in India dates nearly half a century after the end of the reign of Chandragupta II. On the face of this palpable historical evidence, we do not expect the occurrence of the name of Chandragupta in the colophon of the *Mudrārākshasa*. Again, the other names like Dantivarman, Rantivarman, etc., appear to be wrong emendations for Avantivarman, a king whose historicity can be definitely established.

[1] Ghosh doubts "whether Grahavarman ever came to the throne" (*E.I.*, xxiv, p. 284, fn. 8). It is a strange observation, for a reading of the *Harshacharita* dispels every doubt in this respect. The *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* also clearly states that Avantivarman [Paṅk(t)i] was succeeded by Graha (varman) (p. 626). The Nalanda Seal of Su (–) certainly does not mention Grahavarman as a successor of Avantivarman, but there are many such examples where the name of the son, who is to succeed or succeeded his father, has been omitted and that of another son has been mentioned, e.g., a Vaiśālī seal mentions the name of Govindagupta as a son of Chandragupta II by Dhruvadevī, but not that of Kumāragupta I (*A.S.I.R.*, 1903-4, p. 107, Seal No. 1). That Govindagupta was the Yuvarāja is evident from another seal which has been found along with it. In that seal there is an inscription which reads as युवराजपादीयकुमारामात्य. Again, the Bhitari Seal Inscription of Kumāragupta II mentions Purugupta immediately after Kumāragupta and does not mention Skandagupta, the immediate successor of his father (*I.A.*, xix, p. 225). Similarly, the Poona Copper Plate Inscription mentions the name of Yuvarāja Divākarasena, son of Rudrasena II and Prabhāvatīguptā (*E.I.*, xv, p. 41 ff), but in the other Vākāṭaka inscriptions, such as Nachne-ki-talai, and Siwani and Chammak Plates, the name of Mahārāja Pravarasena II, son of Prabhāvatīguptā, occurs immediately after Rudrasena II as being his son and immediate successor (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 234, 236, 245).

[2] Pires has suggested that Grahavarman's name was recorded in the Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jīvitagupta II (*The Maukharis*, p. 107). We, however, do not find any trace of his name in the inscription though the name of his father Avantivarman is certainly mentioned there.

narrative of his reign we owe entirely to Bāṇa. From the *Harshacharita* we learn that when the thought of Rājyaśrī's marriage was worrying Prabhākaravardhana, one day he told his chief queen Yaśomatī: "in general......though a bridegroom may have other merits, the wise especially incline towards good family. Now at the head of all royal houses stand the Mukharas, worshipped, like Śiva's foot-print by all the world. Of that race's pride, Avantivarman, the eldest son, Grahavarman by name, who lacks not his father's virtues, a prince like the lord of planets descended upon earth, seeks our daughter. Upon him, if your Majesty's thoughts are likewise favourable, I propose to bestow her."[1] From another passage in the same work we learn that "on a day of good omen, in the presence of the whole household, he (Prabhākaravardhana) poured the betrothal water upon the hand of an envoy extraordinary, who had arrived previously with instructions from Grahavarman to sue for the princess."[2] These passages of the *Harshacharita* clearly reveal the fact that Grahavarman was the first male issue of Avantivarman and that his marriage took place after the death of his father when he had already ascended the throne.[3]

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[1] *H.C.*, pp. 122-3.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 123.

[3] If his father had been alive, he himself would not have entered into such negotiations in the traditional Indian way. Dr. Tripathi, however, observes : "We should be cautious in drawing any conclusion from Avantivarman's absence during the ceremonies, for he may have stayed behind deeming it imprudent to leave the capital unprotected" (*History of Kanauj*, p. 50). We fail to visualise any crisis in the Maukhari kingdom due to which Avantivarman had to forego the pleasure of attending the marriage of his eldest son, as suggested by Dr. Tripathi. In case the Maukhari kingdom had been threatened from some quarter, as stated by him, the marriage ceremony itself would have been postponed in the larger national interest. In fact, in such a situation, Grahavarman, being the Crown-Prince, would have been by the side of his father in his own capital instead of proceeding to Thanesvar to marry. Besides, we should remember that Bāṇa also makes no mention of Avantivarman in the later narrative of the *Harshacharita* which may warrant such a conclusion. Even Saṁvādaka, the royal messenger, who broke the news of the death of Grahavarman and imprisonment of

This matrimonial alliance was a very important event in the history of the period. And, in the words of Bāṇa himself, it "at length united the two brilliant lines of Pushpabhūti and Mukhara, whose worth, like that of the Sun and Moon houses, is sung by all the world to the gratification of wise men's ears."[1] He has also given us a very graphic and interesting description of the marriage: "All the world bedecked itself with betel perfumes and flowers, distributed with a lavish hand. From every country were summoned companies of skilled artists"..."Throngs of astrologers, set calculating, investigated characteristics of different moments"..."Even kings girt up their loins and busied themselves in carrying out decorative work"..."From the furthest orient had come the queens of all the feudatories, nobles.........well-clad, unwidowed dames with lines of vermilion powder glittering on their foreheads"..."The palace was arrayed in textures flashing on every side like thousands of rainbows"..."Thus the royal household became as it were the essence of freedom from widowhood; a world seemed born full of auspiciousness..." And at last, "Calculated as it were by the people's fingers,......welcomed by reverberations of auspicious music, invoked by astrologers, attracted by wishes...........the marriage day arrived."[2]

But alas ! All these calculations regarding the auspicious moment had been miscalculated. From the *Harshacharita* itself we come to know that, immediately after the death of Prabhākaravardhana, when the two princes of the Sthāneśvara royal family had still not been able even to shake off their grief, a trusted servant of Rājyaśrī named Saṁvādaka arrived from Kānyakubja and delivered the following woeful message: "On the very day on which the king's death was rumoured, His Majesty Grahavarman was by the wicked lord of Mālava cut off from the living along with his noble deeds. Rājyaśrī also, the princess, has been confined like a brigand's

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Rājyaśrī to Rājya and Harsha in the *Harshacharita*, makes no reference to Avantivarman (certainly because he was dead long ago).

[1] *H.C.*, p. 128.

[2] *H.C.*, pp. 123-6.

wife with a pair of iron fetters kissing her feet, and cast into prison at Kānyakubja."[1]

The facts which can be deduced from the awful tale of Saṁvādaka, are of much importance in the political history of the period. The king of Mālava, whose name Bāṇa has even disdained to record, killed Grahavarman, possibly in a battle, took possession of the seat of government of the Maukharis, and put Rājyaśrī into prison to render her completely powerless for taking action against the invader. Although that eminent writer is silent about the name of "the wicked king of Mālava," we have definite information preserved in the Banskhera Copper Plate Inscription of Harsha, that he was Devagupta, against whom Rājyavardhana had to direct his army, evidently for the purpose of avenging the murder of his brother-in-law, the Maukhari king Grahavarman. Devagupta, in all probability, was a cousin brother of Mahāsenagupta, king of Mālava, who had to fight many battles with his neighbours in Northern India both for offensive and defensive purposes. Regarding Devagupta's claim to the throne of Mālava, there is no unanimity of opinion amongst scholars. While it is maintained by some that he was the uterine brother of the two princes, Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta, who had spent many years of their early lives in the royal palace at Sthāneśvara as hostages or as proteges, or, as stated by Bāṇa, as friends of the two princes, Rājya and Harsha, others maintain that he represented a collateral line of the Mālava royal house.[2] As stated above, Devagupta usurped the throne after the death of Mahāsenagupta, who died some time before the death of Prabhākaravardhana. As that Pushpabhūti ruler was not in a position to take any immediate action at that time because of his prolonged and serious illness and since the major portion of his army had been sent to the frontiers of his empire under the command of Rājyavardhana, there was no obstacle for the usurper to carry out his purpose. It is evident, however, that Devagupta was not satisfied with the position acquired by him as the sequence of events tends to show. When he got the information that Prabhākaravardhana was on the verge of death, he immediately attacked the kingdom of the Maukharis, instead of that of the Pushpabhūtis, though it may appear to many to have been a strategical blunder. But it was really not so. The strategy which Devagupta followed, was to uproot at first the more powerful enemy, the Maukhari king Grahavarman, who was an ally of the royal house of the Pushpabhūtis, and thereafter occupy the kingdom of Sthāneśvara by defeating, as he thought, the less powerful enemy, the youthful crown prince Rājyavardhana.[1] He was very sanguine of the fact that if in any way the Maukhari king was prevented from helping the Pushpabhūtis, it would not be difficult for him to oust the two princes, Rājya and Harsha, and, after that, exercise political supremacy over the kingdom of Sthāneśvara and its dependencies without further obstruction from any quarters. History shows that his military strategy was successful, at least partly, since he did occupy Kānyakubja, the Maukhari capital, by killing Grahavarman and casting Rājyaśrī in prison in pursuit of his previous plan. Unfortunately, he wrongly calculated the military strength of the Pushpabhūtis and also the military genius of the heir-apparent, Rājyavardhana (later on king Rājyavardhana II), with the result that his victorious career suddenly came to an end. As we know, he was killed in battle by him soon after his occupation of Kānyakubja. In one of his land-grant charters the defeat of Devagupta at the hands of king Rājyavardhana has been admitted by Emperor Harsha, as mentioned

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[1] *H.C.*, p. 173.
Hillebrandt has suggested that Grahavarman, the son of Avantivarman, was killed in Rājyavardhana's expedition against the Hūṇas (*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgen-landischen Gesellschaft*, xxxix, 131). The suggestion is certainly an ingenious one—only, I am afraid, it can scarcely be ever proved.

[2] See Raychaudhuri, *Pol. Hist. of Anc. Ind.*, p. 515; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 54; Pires, *The Maukharis*, pp. 111-2; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, pp. 74-5.
We strongly believe that Mahāsenagupta was the brother of Mahāsenaguptā, queen of Ādityavardhana, whose son was Prabhākaravardhana.

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1. The strategy adopted by Devagupta is perfectly in consonance with the dictum of Kauṭilya (vii. 5. 275).

above. The death of Grahavarman was thus avenged by the Pushpabhūti king, Rājyavardhana II.

The history of the Maukhari kingdom after the death of Grahavarman is inseparably connected with that of Emperor Harsha, since the latter transferred the seat of his government from Sthāneśvara to Kānyakubja for important political reasons, as we shall see presently.

From the statement of Hsuan Chuang, who is our primary source of information relating to the history of this period, it appears that both Harsha and Rājyaśrī used to sit on the throne together and rule the kingdom.[1] The information supplied by him is interesting but is apparently incomplete. For instance, we do not understand why the Emperor's sister would sit by his side to administer the State, instead of his queen, according to Hindu royal tradition. It also passes comprehension why the royal sister should be invited to share the responsibility of governing the kingdom along with the Emperor. In view of these absurdities, we think that the pilgrim has not stated the facts fully although he has recorded what he had seen with his own eyes. After the death of Grahavarman, who died, as we think, without any issue, constitutionally, his queen Rājyaśrī could be the ruler of the Maukhari kingdom, in the absence or, even during the minority, of any claimant to the throne. Being in the position of the highest executive head of the State, she had the right to appoint any competent person as her political adviser or even as her agent. After the death of Grahavarman, Harsha had transferred his capital to Kānyakubja leaving Sthāneśvara, the old capital of the Pushpabhūtis. The reason for transferring the seat of government from one place to another cannot be easily accounted for, unless it be that he had to help his sister constantly in carrying on the administration of the Maukhari kingdom, which was by no means insignificant in size and also by no means free from dangers due to the policy of territorial aggrandisement of some of the neighbouring powers. The fact that both–the brother and the sister–

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[1] Watters, i, p. 345.

used to sit together on the throne and dispense with the business of the State, as we have been informed by the pilgrim, is not incredible, if we realise correctly the responsibilities of either of them, after the death of Grahavarman. Again, Emperor Harsha had taken the vow of not wearing the crown.[1] If this information as supplied also by Hsuan Chuang be correct, there was no question of the usurpation of the Maukhari throne by Harsha. In our opinion, the transfer of the capital from Sthāneśvara to Kānyakubja by Harsha was to assist his widowed sister in governing the Maukhari kingdom as her representative or political adviser. The main reason which led him to place her on the throne by his side was to show that she represented in her person the interest of the kingdom of the Maukharis, as he did, that of the Pushpabhūtis. It means also that he maintained the political integrity of the Maukhari kingdom as inherited by Rājyaśrī, even though he exercised paramountcy over a considerable portion of Northern India. This is the only possible and rational explanation of information supplied by the Chinese pilgrim that the brother and sister ruled jointly sitting together on the throne. We do not know whether Rājyaśrī survived Harsha or not; but it appears from the aforesaid statement that her political independence was fully recognised by her royal brother by giving her all the opportunities of administering her own kingdom so long as she was alive.[2]

History of the Maukharis in the Post-Harsha Period

From a Nalanda Seal Inscription it appears that king Avantivarman Maukhari had a second son named Sucha-(ndravarman) who appears to have exercised sovereign sway over some part or perhaps the whole of the Maukhari kingdom.[3] That Avantivarman had more than one son is also

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1. Watters, i, p. 343.
2. Harsha lived up to 646 A.D. and, according to Hsuan Chuang, Rājyaśrī was alive up to the time of the sixth quinquennial assembly held at Prayāga, which was attended by the Chinese pilgrim and which took place in 644 A.D. (Watters, i, p. 361ff). As Rājyaśrī was also younger to Harsha, we naturally believe that she outlived her brother.
3. *E.I.*, xxiv, p. 283.

evident from a statement of Bāṇa made in his *Harshacharita* wherein he has specifically mentioned that Grahavarman was the eldest of all.[1] While the existence of Sucha(ndravarman), probably the last of the Maukharis of Kānyakubja, can no longer be doubted, in view of the epigraphic evidence cited above, it seems rather strange why he was not placed on the throne by Harsha, had he the intention of not annexing the Maukhari kingdom. We believe that this second son of Avantivarman was merely a child when Grahavarman Maukhari was killed. After taking everything into consideration, Harsha decided to recognise his sister as the ruler of the Maukhari territory in preference to Sucha(ndravarman) who was considered by him to be unfit for placing on the throne on account of his tender age. We have already mentioned above that king Avantivarman had a premature death for which reason he could not even arrange for the marriage of the heir-apparent Grahavarman during his lifetime. In view of the serious responsibility that had befallen on the shoulders of Harsha, viz., to look after the interest and welfare of his widowed sister Rājyaśrī and also that of the orphan prince Sucha(ndravarman), there is no doubt that the policy which Harsha had adopted in respect of the Maukhari kingdom was the most correct, reasonable and honest, taking the political condition of Northern India as a whole into consideration.

That Harsha made Kānyakubja the seat of his government whence he ruled over his empire, including the Maukhari kingdom, is more than evident. We do not know when exactly his death took place, but the probability, as stated above, is that it occurred some time in 646-47 A.D. The reason for our acceptance of this date is mainly based on the date of Wang-hiuen-tse's return to Ch'ang-an, the imperial capital of China during the T'ang period, after fulfilling his first Mission and that of his arrival in India, after nine or ten months, in connection with the Second Mission. He returned to China after his first Mission either at the close of 646 A.D. or towards the beginning of 647 A.D. and came back to India towards the close of 647 A.D., when Emperor Harsha was already dead.[1]

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[1] *H.C.*, p. 122. —Text, p. 141.
तत्रापि तिलकभूतस्यावन्तिवर्मणः सूनुरग्रजो ग्रहवर्मा नाम

It will be seen from what we have stated above that there was no possibility for the younger brother of king Grahavarman Maukhari to rule over his ancestral kingdom at least up to the middle of the year 648 A.D. because it had remained long in the possession of Harsha, and after him, for at least one year, under the usurper Arjuna, as stated in the Chinese annals. During the latter part of 648 A.D. Sucha(ndravarman) might have ascended the throne, there being possibly no further impediment to his accession. But it is not certain for how many years exactly he ruled. There is, however, no doubt that he exercised sovereign sway over the former Maukhari kingdom and probably also over other territories which were previously annexed to it. The imperialistic title, *Mahārājādhirāja*, as borne by him, must not lead us to the conclusion that he ruled as a paramount sovereign like Harsha, over the whole of Northern India, since we know for certain that his later Gupta contemporary Ādityasena was ruling independently over a considerable portion of the Gangetic valley in the east during the very same period.[2] The discovery of the seal of Sucha(ndravarman) at Nalanda, which lay in the territory of that Gupta monarch, may only be taken to be an indication of the fact that the two rulers maintained friendly or diplomatic relations with each other, a fact which might have induced the Maukhari king to make an endowment to the Nalanda University, the proper use of which has been testified to by the discovery of his seal in its ruins. Whatever may be the case, there is no evidence, whether positive or negative, which might be considered to be an indication of the fact that the two royal families were on unfriendly terms with each other.

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[1] *I. A.*, ix, p. 20; See also *Sino-Indian Studies*, i, p. 69.

[2] *E. I.*, xxiv, p. 285; *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 212, Nos. 44 and 45 (Mandar Hill Rock Inscription).

In the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* which may be assigned to the 8th century A.D. and in which a list of the Maukhari kings of Kānyakubja is to be found, there is the mention of a king named Suvra after Graha(varman) as stated above.[1] The presumption that naturally arises is that Suvra is the same as Sucha(ndravarman) of the aforesaid Nalanda Seal, coming, as it does, after Graha(varman). It may be noted here that Chakravarti finds traces of the latter *cha* after *su* and restores the name of the king in question as Sucha(ndravarman).[2]

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[1] *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, p. 626; Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, p. 27.

[2] Mr. A. Ghosh reads the name of the son of Avantivarman occurring in the Nalanda Seal Inscription edited by him as Suva............(*E. I.*, xxiv, p. 285; cf. also p. 284, n. 6).

Since the portion of the seal where the name occurs has peeled off, only two letters may be read with more or less certainty. According to Mr. Ghosh, these two letters may be read either as Suva........or Sucha......The note that has been appended by Dr. N. P. Chakravarti, on the reading of those two letters, is as follows : "It is curious that the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* mentions a king Suvra after Graha; see Ganapati Sastri's edition (Triv. Skt. Series), p. 626. See also K. P. Jayaswal, *An Imperial History of India*, p. 27/19(c). Jayaswala corrects the last *pada* of the verse as *Graha-Suvrata* (*a*) *th=aparaḥ* which, according to ordinary rules of *Anushṭubh*, would spoil the metre. As the last visible letter on this seal seems to be a part of *n* and as there seems to be a *repha* sign below it, I am tempted to restore the concluding portion as *Śrī-Sucha*(*ndravarmmā Maukhariḥ*)." The restoration of the name as suggested by Dr. Chakravarti and the arguments adduced by him in support thereof are highly convincing. It is a well-known fact that in the inscriptions and coins of the Gupta and Post-Gupta periods *cha* is sometimes written as *va* and *vice versa;* we have a number of instances to show where confusion has arisen because of the negligence on the part of the scribe. This feature is also noticeable in the inscriptions of the Gurjara-Pratīhāras written in proto-Nāgarī script. From this point of view, the suggestion of Dr. Chakravarti appears to be valid. We, therefore, prefer to accept the reading of the name as suggested by him. One thing is, however, certain, and that is—we cannot be definite on this point till a similar Maukhari seal comes to light.

In the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, Pt. T. G. Sastri reads the name of the successor of Avantivarman as Suvra. Unfortunately, however, it is not possible to suggest any name beginning with these two letters, except Suvratavarman. But, considering the fact that the writer of that work, whatever might have been his source of information, has

We, however, find some difficulty in considering Sucha(ndravarman) Suvra(tavarman ?) to be identical, since the latter has been placed genealogically after Graha(varman) and consequently should be considered to be his son rather than his brother. Taking into consideration the arrangement of the names as we find in that text, viz., the name of the son occurs after that of his father, this suspicion of ours is by no means baseless. Merely because both the names begin with the syllable *Su*, the kings who bore them cannot be considered to be one and the same person. There is, thus, the possibility of a king named Suvra(tavarman) succeeding his uncle Sucha (ndravarman), if we take our stand on the genealogical arrangement of the kings as given in that Buddhist work. We, however, do not want to lay much emphasis on this point, since neither Bāṇa nor Hsuan Chuang has made any direct or indirect reference to the son and successor of Grahavarman's queen Rājyaśrī. On the other hand, the impression that we get about her from their respective works is that she had indeed a very short married life.

The last of the Maukharis of Kānyakubja, as it appears to us by taking the evidence of the aforesaid Nālandā Seal Inscription into consideration, was Sucha(ndravarman)[1] and the same, as suggested by *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, was Suvra (tavarman).[2] But whether there was any other king after him in that line, is a point which requires careful investigation. From a certain Nepalese inscription we learn of a Maukhari chief named Bhogavarman who became the son-in-law of king Ādityasena of Magadha.[3] The chronological data preserved in the inscription of Jayadeva II of the Thakuri family of Nepal enable us to place Bhogavarman approximately in the

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given wrong readings of names in many places, we prefer to accept the name as restored by Dr. Chakravarti, which, in our opinion, has been supported by certain grammatical and palaeographical facts which cannot be easily ignored. Cf., *E. I.*, xxiv, p. 284, n. 6; *A. M. M. K.*, ed., Ganapati Sastri, p. 626.

[1] *E. I.*, xxiv, p. 285.

[2] *A. M. M. K.*, p. 626.

[3] *I. A.*, ix, p. 178, Ins. no. 15, line 13 (Ins. of Jayadeva II).

third and fourth quarters of the 7th cent. A.D.[1] We learn further from the same source that his daughter Vatsadevī was married to the Thakuri king Śivadeva II of Nepal who was ruling in the year 725 A.D.[2] Unfortunately, no information is available about the date of his marriage with Vatsadevī; but the presumption is that he must have married much earlier than that date. We will not be very far from truth if we fix it at about 710 A.D. when she was about 16 years of age. In order to understand our hypothesis in its proper setting the probable dates and facts noted below are to be considered.

Grahavarman Maukhari died towards the middle of the year 605 A.D. About that time queen Rājyaśrī was about 12 years of age, she having been born in the year c. 593 A.D.[3] There was thus no question on the part of the couple to have a child.[4] Harsha ascended the throne in the second half of the year 606 A.D. and continued to rule from Kānyakubja at least up to the middle of the year 646 A.D., as stated above. That Avantivarman had a son by the name of Sucha(ndravarman), who was younger to Grahavarman, can no longer be doubted. As he had ruled, oviously after Harsha, his accession to the throne appears to have taken place in the year 648 A.D., probably in the second half of it. It may be noted here that, according to the Chinese authorities, Arjuna usurped the throne of Kānyakubja immediately after the death of Harsha and continued to rule till the middle of 648 A.D., he being presented as a war-captive before the Chinese emperor in the very same year. There is, thus, no gap in the chronology of the history of Kānyakubja up to the middle of the year 648 A.D. since the death of King Avantivarman. The accession of the younger brother of Grahavarman could take place only in the latter part of the year 648 A.D. when the throne of Kānyakubja was vacant. Regarding his age at the time of his accession, it may be mentioned here that since he was born sometime before the death of Avantivarman which took place in or about the year 602 A.D. and since he could not be raised to the throne by Harsha as the legitimate successor of Grahavarmen, he must have been merely a child of four or five years of age when his father died. We have already stated above on the basis of certain available data that his father had a premature death. Since the duration of Harsha's reign from Kānyakubja was approximately of 42 years, Sucha(ndravarman), in our opinion, ascended the throne when he was 46 years old, more or less. According to our calculations he ruled up to c. 664 A.D., that is to say, he enjoyed a reign of about 16 years. We have obtained this approximate date with the help of certain chronological data and historical facts stated below.

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[1] *I. A.*, ix, p. 178, Ins, no. 15, line 13 (Ins. of Jayadeva II).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] We arrive at this date on the basis of certain data contained in the *Harshacharita.* According to Bāṇa, there was a difference of about six years between the age of Rājyavardhana and Rājyaśrī and that Harsha was about two years old when Rājyaśrī was born (*H. C.*, pp. 115–6). Now it is unanimously held by all historians that Prabhākaravardhana's death and Rājyavardhana's expedition against the Hūṇas, his accession and death, all took place in 605–6 A. D. At that time, according to Bāṇa, Rājyavardhana's age "fitted him for wearing armour" (*H.C.*, p. 132) and that "his beard showed but a faint growth" (*H. C.*, p. 166). This makes us conclude that at that time Rājyavardhana could not have been more than eighteen years old. It means that Harsha must have been born in about 590 A. D. and Rājyaśrī in c. 593 A. D. Here we may mention that C. V. Vaidya (*H. M. H. I.*, i, p. 41 ff) has also suggested the same date for the birth of Harsha on the basis of certain astronomical calculations which he made on the information given in the *Harshacharita.*

[4] If Rājyaśrī had a baby or had even conceived by that time, she would not have gone to immolate herself in the Vindhya forest after the death of Grahavarman. This fact is also supported by a statement made on behalf of Rājyaśrī by Patralatā, her betel–bearer, in the *Harshacharita* : "A husband or a son is a woman's true support; but to those who are deprived of both, it is immodesty even to continue to live as mere fuel for the fire of misery" (*H. C.*, p. 254).

The chronology of the history of Kānyakubja from 650 to 700 A.D. does not stand on a firm footing unlike that of the first half of the 7th cent. A.D. It is only with the help of backward calculations that we have been able to fix approximately the year of the death of Sucha(ndravarman). We have mentioned above that certain Nepalese inscriptions throw light on the later Maukhari history. Vatsadevī, the daughter of Bhogavarman, a Maukhari chief, was married to king Śivadeva II. The dates available from the aforesaid records are 119 and 143 (?) of the Harsha Saṁvat corresponding to 724 and 748 (?) A.D. respectively.[1] When these inscriptions were engraved, Śivadeva II was ruling over Nepal. From an inscription of Jayadeva II, son of Śivadeva II, dated in the year 153 of the Harsha Saṁvat, corresponding to 758 A.D., it appears that his mother was Vatsadevī who was the daughter of king Bhogavarman Maukhari and grand-daughter of king Ādityasena.[2] Vatsadevī appears to have been married some time before the year 724 A.D. In this connection it may be noted here that since her son Jayadeva II ascended the throne of Nepal, he should be expected ordinarily to have been the crown-prince and his mother, the chief queen. Thus, if she was ruling along with her consort Śivadeva II in 724 A.D., which is the earliest date for that king known to us so far, we should consider her to have been about 29 years of age in that year. She might have been older even by two or three years than the age suggested by us but not younger in any case, according to our computation. We will not be very far from truth if we fix 694 A.D. as the probable date of her birth, although there is the possibility of her being born between 692 and 694 A.D. Now the question that arises here is : what was the age of her father Bhogavarman when she was born ? According to our calculations, he was 45 or 46 years old when his daughter in question was born. This will obviously lead us to fix 648 A.D. approximately as the date of his birth. Before we proceed further certain facts in the history of the Later Guptas of Magadha have to be taken into consideration to substantiate the chronological sequence suggested above. These may be set forth as follows :

King Mādhavagupta, son of king Mahāsenagupta, was a friend of Emperor Harsha, since childhood, and later on, his distinguished ally. There was, again, not much difference between the age of the two. In fact, both of them appear to have been born about the year 590 A.D. These interesting and important pieces of information have been supplied by the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa and the Aphsad Stone Inscription of Ādityasena.[1] From the latter source it also appears that he was appointed viceroy of the eastern part of Harsha's dominion in Northern India excluding Kāmarūpa, obviously after the flight of Śaśāṅka.[2] As stated before, Harsha died in the year 646 A.D., but we do not, in the absence of any reliable datum, know when the death of Mādhavagupta took place. The son of the latter was Ādityasena who bore the imperialistic title *Mahārājādhirāja*, apparently because of the vastness of his kingdom.[3] Of the three inscriptions belonging to his reign one preserves a date and that is 672 A.D. (66 H.E.).[4] Although a single chronological datum cannot be considered to be of sufficient help towards fixing the lower limit of Mādhavagupta's period of administration or the earlier limit of Ādityasena's reign as an independent ruler of the eastern part of Northern India, we do not think that there will be a gross anachronism if we fix 655 A.D. for the same. This approximation is based on the supposition that Mādhavagupta lived for 65 years, which is quite normal. Thus, if Mādhavagupta died in 655 A.D. and Ādityasena was at least 30 years old at the time of his accession, the birth of the latter may be fixed in or about the year 625 A.D. According to our computations, Mādhavagupta was 35 years old when prince Ādityasena was born.

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[1] *I. A.*, ix, pp. 174, 176, Ins. Nos. 12 & 13.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 178, Ins. No. 15.

We have mentioned above that Sucha(ndravarman) died in c. 664 A.D. This Maukhari king, chronologically speaking, was thus in a position to establish matrimonial alliance between his family and that of the Later Guptas of Magadha by giving his son in marriage with the daughter of king Ādityasena. Further, we have mentioned above that Vatsadevī was born when her father Bhogavarman was approximately 45 or 46

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1. *H. C.*, p. 119, 235; *C. I. I.*, iii, pp. 203–4, No. 42.
2. *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 203 ff, No. 42.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 210, No. 43 (Shahpur Image Inscription).

years of age. This will lead us to fix the date of Bhogavarman's birth in the years 648-49 A.D. Thus the difference of age between Ādityasena, the father-in-law and Bhogavarman, the son-in-law, would be approximately 23 years, which is normal. It will be noticed further that this chronological position establishes the contemporaneity of the Maukhari king Sucha(ndravarman), his son Bhogavarman and the Gupta king Ādityasena.

If we, therefore, place Bhogavarman after Sucha(ndravarman) or whatever might have been his real name as his son and successor, no chronological difficulty is to be envisaged. It is, however, a fact that the addition of a new name in the list of the Maukhari kings of Kānyakubja is only possible with the help of the aforesaid Nepalese inscriptions and that too by means of backward calculation which is by no means unhistorical or unreasonable. It remains, however, for the future historians to prove the correctness of the approximate dates given above and place Bhogavarman correctly in the chronology of Maukhari history in the light of fresh epigraphic data, if available.

The evidenee of the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* which is considered to be one of the sources of information relating to the genealogy of the Maukharis of Kānyakubja, tends to show that after 'Suvra.........' (Suchandravarman) there were a few rulers, though very much less powerful (*bhrashṭa-maryādā*) than their predecessors who had enjoyed imperial dignity.[1] Unfortunately, that Buddhist work does not mention their names. It is really fortunate that one of those insignificant Maukhari kings has found mention in certain Nepalese inscriptions which are our only sources of information about him. For the present, however, there is no possibility of ascertaining either the name of his immediate successor or any noteworthy historical event connected with his reign. Our presumption is that after Bhogavarman, Maukhari kingdom was reduced to vassalage by some Later Gupta king of Magadha, probably Vishṇugupta Chandrāditya, one of the most powerful kings in that line, whose gold coins have been found in different parts of the Gangetic valley.

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[1] *A. M. M. K.*, p. 626.

APPENDIX

The Maukhari Family of Rajputana

There is a stone pillar at Baḍvā in the former Kotah State, Rajputana, bearing three short donative inscriptions which throw some light on the history of the Maukharis. That the pillar is a '*yūpa*', is evident from all those epigraphs. It was set up by Balavardhana, Somadeva and Balasiṁha, sons of the *Senāpati* Bala of the Maukhari family (*Maukhareḥ,* wrongly written as *Mokhareḥ*) to commemorate the *Trirātra* sacrifice which they had individually performed on the 5th day in the bright fortnight of the month of Phālguna, in the *Kṛita* year 295 (A.D. 238), and the gift of 1000 cows which each one of them had made separately on that occasion (*E.I.*, xxiii, p. 52). Since nothing more has been recorded in the aforesaid inscriptions about Bala, it is difficult for us to determine his status, through the epithet *Senāpati* occurring before his name. He might have been either the commander-in-chief of the army or some local ruler of Rajputana, whose predecessor had become independent shortly after the dismemberment of the Kushāṇa Empire (c. 190 A.D.), or himself the ruler of a small principality. Ever since the time of Pushyamitra, who was popularly known as *Senānī* or *Senāpati* Pushyamitra, even after becoming an independent ruler and the founder of a kingdom of no mean magnitude, many military officers of the highest rank are known to have usurped the power and ruled independently, like Dharasena I, Bhaṭārkka and Bappadeva (*C.I.I.*, iii, pp. 41, 165, 247). The aforesaid pillar inscriptions may well be taken to suggest Maukhari rule in the west like the Nagarjuni Hill Cave Inscriptions throwing some light on the political supremacy of that family in the East. We are, however, not certain whether there was any connection between the Maukharis of Baḍvā and those of Kānyakubja, although that presumption cannot be altogether ruled out. Apart from the date specified above, which occurs in all the three *yūpa* inscriptions, the antiquity depends also on their language and script. All of them have been written in Sanskrit in which influence of Prākṛit can be clearly traced, and the script is Brāhmī of the pre-Gupta period.

CHAPTER V

THE LATER GUPTAS OF MAGADHA

Origin of the Family

Mādhavagupta, the founder of the house of the Later Guptas of Magadha, has been specifically mentioned in the Aphsad Stone Inscription as a friend of Harsha.[1] This interesting piece of information has received historical corroboration in view of the fact that Bāṇa too, in his *Harshacharita*, has referred to him as a companion of the younger son of Prabhākaravardhana viz., Harsha.[2] In fact, we learn much about Mādhavagupta from the aforesaid work, whose contemporaneity with that illustrious historical character cannot be doubted. It is quite apparent that after the conquest of the territories of Śaśāṅka lying to the south-west of the Ganges, Emperor Harsha appointed him as his viceroy obviously with full administrative and military powers so that he might take prompt action in case the king of Gauḍa made any attempts to reassert his supremacy over those areas which were adjacent to his kingdom. Mādhavagupta, it appears from the Aphsad Stone Inscription, was a lineal descendant of Kṛishṇagupta, the founder of the house of Later Guptas of Mālava and was the seventh in descent from him. According to the same inscription, his father was Mahāsenagupta, who was perhaps the most powerful king of that dynasty, as is apparent from the extensive conquests made by him in the Ganges valley. We do not know for certain whether Kṛishṇagupta wag a scion of the Imperial Gupta family, but, according to our computations, he was a contemporary of the Gupta emperor Skandagupta.[3] We are told in the Junagadh Rock Inscription of that Gupta Emperor that, when he successfully crushed the rebellion of his feudatory chiefs who had asserted their independence almost simultaneously, taking advantage of the political conditions of the day, he appointed such governors in all the provinces within his empire [*sarvveshu deśeshu vidhāya goptṛi* (*ptṛī*)*n*] whom he thought not only to be very competent for the purpose but also that they would remain loyal to him.[1] This administrative measure was obviously undertaken with the sole intention of curbing rebellious tendencies of those feudatory chiefs and thereby preventing them from creating further trouble in future. Mahārāja Kṛishṇagupta appears to

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[1] *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 204.
श्रीहर्षदेव-निज संगम-वाञ्छया
(See Appendix).

[2] *H. C.*, pp. 119 and 235.

[3] According to our computations the following are the dates of accession of the kings of this line :

Kṛishṇagupta ..	c. 460 A. D.
Harshagupta ..	c. 480 A. D.
Jīvitagupta I ..	c. 500 A. D.
Kumāragupta ..	c. 520 A. D.
Dāmodaragupta ..	c. 545 A. D
Mahāsenagupta ..	c. 575 A. D. (c. 594–647 A. D. –Mālava under the Pushpabhūtis).
Mādhavagupta ..	c. 619–647 A. D. (Viceroy of Harsha in Magadha). c. 647–654 A.D. (independent ruler).
Ādityasena ..	c. 655 A. D.
Devagupta ..	c. 675 A. D.
Vishṇugupta ..	c. 695 A. D.

Fleet places Kṛishṇagupta, from whom the descent of the family is traced, between 475 and 500 A. D. He thus makes him a contemporary of Budhagupta (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 14); H. C. Ray, however, approximately fixes the period between c. 500 to 700 A. D. for the reign of all the eleven princes (*I. C.*, 1941, p. 135). H. C., Raychaudhuri, on the other hand, is of the opinion that the first four rulers of the line (*i. e.*, Kṛishṇagupta, Harshagupta, Jīvitagupta and Kumāragupta) ruled between 510 and 554 A. D. (*P. H. A. I.*, p. 600).

[1] *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 59.

have been one of such officers appointed by Skandagupta and he was specially selected by the emperor himself for the administration of Mālava which formed a part of his empire. The second part of the name of Kṛishṇagupta may be taken to be an indication of the fact that he was a scion of the Imperial Gupta house. It may be mentioned here that during the period under consideration actually the members of that particular royal family were using the word--'*gupta*' as a second part of their names, as the Pushpabhūti kings later used the word--'*vardhana*,' or the Maukharis—'*varman*.' There might have been a few rulers who used the word--'*gupta*' after their respective names even though they did not belong to the Imperial Gupta family; but such instances are very few in number and do not show that it was the custom of the royal houses to which they belonged, as it was in the case of the scions of the Imperial Gupta house. Since all the members of this family, with the exception of Ādityasena, bore names ending in the word--'*gupta*', we have no other alternative but to infer that the founder of this particular line viz., Kṛishṇagupta might have been a near relative of Skandagupta so as to elicit the trust and confidence imposed on him.[1]

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1. Cf. Fleet, *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 14; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 60; Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 600, n. 1; Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, i, p. 337, n. 4.

Some scholars like H. C. Ray (*I. C.*, 1941, p. 134), D. C. Sircar (*J. R. A. S. B.*, Letters, xi, p. 69, n. 1) and R. C. Majumdar (*Classical Age*, p. 76) are, however, of the opinion that this dynasty had no connection whatsoever with the Imperial Guptas. The arguments set forth by the above mentioned scholars in support of their theory, may be summed up as follows : (1) there is not even the slightest hint of any such relationship in the records of the Later Guptas. (2) the names of all the princes in the line do not end in *gupta* and (3) although the names of the rulers belonging to the line of Kṛishṇagupta and those belonging to the Imperial Gupta family have names ending with the word *gupta*, it does not necessarily prove that the former royal house was in any way connected with the latter. In this connection, we may draw the attention of scholars to the fact that so far only two inscriptions are available to trace the genealogy of the Later Gupta family under discussion, viz., Aphsad Stone Inscription and Deo-Baranark Inscription. The former records the names of the first eight members

The Chronology of the Later Guptas of Magadha

As stated above, the dynasty of the Later Guptas of Magadha which was founded by Mādhavagupta continued for over a century and ended with Jīvitagupta II. Our knowledge of the history of this family is by no means adequate and that is because of the fact that we have got only two inscriptions on which we can confidently depend for the purpose of reconstructing their history. They are, (1) the Aphsad Stone Inscription of Ādityasena and (2) the Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jīvitagupta II.[1] Besides these, there are three more inscriptions belonging to the time of Ādityasena, two of which have been discovered at Mandar Hill and one at Shahpur.[2] The

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while the latter the last five. Under the circumstances, it would be very unreasonable on our part to build up a theory relating to the relationship of the Later Guptas with the Imperial Guptas. Any conclusion based on negative evidence, is purely hypothetical and is, thus, of dubious historical value. It is true that the name of one of the rulers of the Later Gupta family, viz., Ādityasena, is conspicuous by not having the word—'*gupta*' after it, but it is equally true that in the line of the Imperial Guptas, we also come across the name of a ruler without the word—'*gupta*' suffixed to it. It is needless to mention here that he is Ghaṭotkacha, father of Emperor Chandragupta I. We are, therefore, constrained to admit that the argument of the aforesaid historians relating to the absence of that family designation after the name of Ādityasena is not broad-based and thus untenable. We wonder how they overlooked the case of the father of Chandragupta I in this context. With regard to the objection that the similarity of names can lead to no definite conclusion, we may point out that it does not carry much weight. It is certainly true that there are several instances in Indian history where members of two different dynasties, without having any relationship between them, bore either identical names or names having similar endings, e. g.,–*pāla* or–*varman*. But we should not forget that those dynasties ruled at long intrervals from one another, while on the other hand, the earlier kings of the Later Gupta house were contemporaries of the Later rulers of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. This fact tends to show that the connection between those two royal houses cannot be utterly impossible. We regret to say that we do not find any special reason in their arguments which materially affects the theory supported by us.

[1] *C. I. I.*, iii, pp. 202 and 215.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 212 and 210.

genealogy of the family, according to the aforesaid sources, and the probable dates of the rulers belonging to that line are as follows:

		Date of Accession
Mādhavagupta (as king)	...	c. 647 A.D.
(m. Śrīmatīdevī)		
Ādityasena	...	c. 655 A.D.
(m. Koṇadevī)		
Devaguptadeva	...	c. 675 A.D.
(m. Kamalādevī)		
Vishṇuguptadeva	...	c. 695 A.D.
(m. Ijjādevī)		
Jīvitaguptadeva		

The chronology of the Later Gupta family of Magadha as given above has received partial corroboration from the above mentioned Shahpur Stone Inscription and also from an inscription discovered in Nepal which is really important for more than one reason, as we shall see below. The date supplied by the former viz., 66 H.E. corresponds to 672–73 A.D. and that by the latter viz., 153 H.E. is equivalent to 758 A.D.[1] It may be noted here that of the two dates mentioned above the former falls in the reign of Ādityasena and is, therefore, to be considered to be a definite chronological landmark in respect of the history of the Later Guptas of Magadha. It will thus be seen that the dates of the rulers belonging to this particular royal house, as computed by us, are only approximately correct, although we admit that in the absence of a reference to any of the rulers belonging to this family in the dated epigraphic records of their contemporaries, our computations remain unsubstantiated or unconfirmed, as it has happened in the case of many other kings belonging to the period under consideration.

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[1] *C. I. I.*, iii p. 210; *I. A.*, ix, p. 178 (Ins. No. 15).

History of the Family

(*a*) *Mādhavagupta* (c. 647-654 A.D.):

Mādhavagupta, the founder of the later Gupta house in Magadha, was the younger son of Mahāsenagupta of Mālava. Bāṇa has recorded this fact but without mentioning the name of the Mālava king.[1] The Aphsad Stone Inscription of Ādityasena, however, has supplied this much-needed information by specifically mentioning that he was the son of Mahāsenagupta, a lineal descendant of Kṛishṇagupta. As already mentioned, the Mālava king had sent his two sons, Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta, to the court of Prabhākaravardhana for their personal safety. Mādhavagupta thus passed his early life at Sthāneśvara as a companion of Harsha. This companionship continued for a very long time and when Harshavardhana left Sthāneśvara to punish Śaśāṅka, Mādhavagupta also accompanied him and always remained by his side.[2] After the conquest of large areas of Eastern India, which were formerly under the suzerainty of Gauḍa, Harsha seems to have appointed him as his viceroy in Magadha in c. 618 A.D. This is proved by the fact that soon after Harsha's death, Ādityasena, son of Mādhavagupta, is found in undisputed possession of Magadha as an independent ruler. It must have been an important appointment like that of Parṇadatta in Saurāshṭra during the reign of Skandagupta and, naturally therefore, the Pushpabhūti monarch selected Mādhavagupta, who has been described "as the leader of those who acquire renown in war; a very store-house of goodness, the best of those who excel in the collection and bestowal of riches, the natural home of wealth, truth, and learning, and a firm bridge of religion," for the same.[3]

Mādhavagupta thus seems to have ruled as the viceroy of Harsha till about 647 A.D., but after the death of the latter and the usurpation of his throne by Arjuna, he must have declared his independence and assumed the full sovereign

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1. *H. C.*, p. 119.
2. *Ibid*, p. 235.
3. *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 206.

power over Magadha.[1] But as already mentioned above, according to our computations, his rule as an independent sovereign, seems to have come to an end in about 655 A.D., when he was about 65 years old.

Certain political events of supreme national importance were taking place at the time when Mādhavagupta was ruling as an independent sovereign over Magadha and, in which, he deliberately abstained from taking any active part himself even though they concerned primarily an adjoining territory. In the year 648 A.D., or more explicitly in the earlier part of it, the Chinese ambassador Wang-hiuen-tse came to India laden with presents which T'ai Tsung, Emperor of China, had sent through him for Harshavardhana. It was, however, not known to either that the death of that Indian Emperor had already taken place. Wang-hiuen-tse, as we know, had come through Tibet and Nepal with armed escorts composed mainly of Chinese cavalry. While he was proceeding towards Kānyakubja to pay his credentials to Emperor Harshavardhana and present him the gifts which he had brought from China, he was suddenly attacked by Arjuna, probably a local ruler of Tīrabhukti, who had acquired his independence after the death of that Emperor. The attack was so sudden that the Chinese ambassador narrowly managed to escape into the Tibetan territory thereby saving his life, though most of his escort were killed. As regards Arjuna, it has been stated in the Chinese annals that he assumed sovereignty by usurping the throne at Kānyakubja left vacant by the death of

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[1] Basak is of the opinion that "it does not seem quite proper to assume that Mādhavagupta became a *subordinate* ally of the Vardhana house; his position rather was very high and independent in Magadha" (*H. N. E. I.*, p. 126). In this connection, we may recall the fact that the Aphsad Stone Inscription of Ādityasena mentions about the desire of Mādhavagupta "to associate himself with the glorious Harshadeva." It leaves no room for any doubt that the passage refers to the lifetime of Harsha who had appointed that Later Gupta prince as his viceroy in Magadha and due to which Mādhavagupta must have been obliged to him. After the death of the Pushpabhūti monarch, of course, *without any doubt*, his position became "high and independent".

Harsha.[1] To what extent this statement is correct, is so far unknown to us; but there is no doubt that a considerable portion of the upper Ganges basin had come under the possession of Arjuna. From the same source it further appears that Wang-hiuen-tse, in pursuance of the order of the Chinese Emperor, invaded Northern India with a strong force, comprised mostly of Tibetan and Nepali horsemen, which was placed at his command by the then Tibetan king, Srong-tsan-Gampo. The reasons as to why he had rendered this help to Wang-hiuen-tse need not be stated here as they are well-known to history. When the invading army landed in the plains of India, a fierce fight ensued in the course of which Arjuna was defeated and captured and was subsequently sent to the Chinese capital as a war-prisoner along with a large number of Indian soldiers. Thus, avenging the insult heaped on his master, the Emperor of China, Wang-hiuen-tse went back home in triumph by the same route through which he had come.[2] Although such an important political event had taken place when Mādhavagupta was on the throne and the theatre of this war lay in an adjoining territory, he did not take any part in it, obviously because he considered the actions of Arjuna to be thoroughly unjustifiable and undignified in view of the cordial relations then existing between India and China. Thus, the policies of Arjuna and that of Mādhavagupta in respect of China were entirely different; and we can only say that the latter had adopted the right course, not only for the safety of his own kingdom but also for purposes of maintaining friendly relations with the contemporary rulers of Nepal, Tibet and China, the three Asiatic powers of the time forming a strong political block, which course, diplomatically, was the most prudent one.

Mādhavagupta seems to have followed a pacifist policy at a time when the political conditions of Northern India were by no means peaceful. He continued to maintain friendly relations with Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa, and

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[1] *I. A.*, ix, p. 20.

[2] *Ibid.*

Sucha (ndravarman), the Maukhari king of Kānyakubja, who had succeeded Harsha to the vacant throne, as we have stated above. It was because of his cordial relations with that Maukhari king that his grand-daughter was married to Maukhari Bhogavarman, who was, in all probability, the son and successor of Sucha (ndravarman).[1]

(b) *Ādityasena* (c. 655–675 A.D.)

Mādhavagupta, according to the Aphsad Stone Inscription, was succeeded by his son Ādityasena, who was not only a military genius but also an able administrator. He also took full advantage of the chaotic conditions that had followed the death of Harsha in asserting his authority all around. The discovery of his epigraphs at Aphsad in the Gaya district and at Shahpur (66 H. S.) in the Patna district clearly indicate his suzerainty over Magadha.[2] Another inscription discovered at Mandar Hill in the Bhagalpur district, Bihar, tends to show that besides Magadha, the region which may approximately be considered identical with the ancient Aṅga also formed a part of his kingdom.[3] There seems to have been originally one more inscription of that king at the very same place on that hill, but it was subsequently removed from there. The slab of stone on which it was engraved is now to be seen in the porch of the famous temple of Vaidyanātha at Deoghar in the Santal Parganas, Bihar.[4] The inscription mentioned last speaks eloquently of the prowess and glory of Ādityasena eulogising him as the "ruler of the (whole) earth up to the shores of the oceans," and as one who performed three *Aśvamedha* and other great sacrifices. It further brings to our notice the fact that he had been to the Choḷa country ; but it does not adduce any reasons for his this visit, unless it be that he had conducted a campaign against the Choḷas much in the same way as

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1. *I. A.*, ix, p. 178, Ins. No. 15.
2. *C.I.I.*, pp. 200, 208.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 212, n. 6.

   The characters of this epigraph are very late and, therefore, it seems to be a copy of the original inscription engraved on the Mandar Hill.

Emperor Harshavardhana had done a few decades earlier.[1] It is quite possible that the Gupta king had directed his *digvijaya* campaigns towards the extreme South in the course of which he invaded the kingdom of the Choḷas. Since Ādityasena is known to have performed three Horse-sacrifices, one is apt to presume that he came out victorious in his campaigns in the Deccan and also forced the Choḷa king to tender his submission to him in some tangible form. But, to reach the Choḷa country, he must have taken his army through the territories of the Pallava king Parameśvaravarman I (c. 670–695 A. D.) who, during this period, was busy defending his kingdom against the aggression of the Chālukyan king, Vikramāditya I (655–681 A. D.), son of Pulakeśin II. Ādityasena, on his way to the Choḷa kingdom, does not seem to have encountered any serious opposition in the Pallava territories in view of the state of anarchy and confusion which prevailed on its western and north-western frontiers resultant of the long-drawn out warfare between its king and the Chālukyan monarch, Vikramāditya I.[2] Although we have no direct evidence of the Gupta king's campaigns in the territories of the Pallavas in the course of his *digvijaya* in the South, yet, in view of what we have stated above, it may be considered to be a fact, if we take into consideration the possible route as well as the location of that kingdom.

Ādityasena might also have extended his victorious arms in the East as far as the River Brahmaputra and towards the South along the coast of the Bay of Bengal and Orissa which achievements could have provided occasions for him to perform the other two Horse-sacrifices. It is specifically mentioned in one of his inscriptions, cited above, that he brought the whole of the country up to the sea-shores under his control.[1] It is quite possible that he conquered the entire regions lying north of his kingdom beyond the Ganges thereby extending his sovereign sway as far as the foot-hills of the Himalayas, which constituted the southern boundary of Nepal. But he does not seem to have encroached upon any portion of the neighbouring Maukhari kingdom, apparently because of the fact that he had given his daughter in marriage to Maukhari Bhogavarman who, in our opinion, was the son and successor of the Maukhari king Sucha(ndravarman). It is because of his these extensive conquests in Northern India and the Deccan that Ādityasena, in the lineage of Kṛishṇagupta, bore, for the first time, the imperialistic titles of '*Paramabhaṭṭāraka*' and '*Mahārājādhirāja*,' which he could justly have claimed.[2] In the words of the compiler of the Aphsad Stone Inscription, Ādityasena was the "guardian of the world, by whose white umbrella the whole circuit of the earth is covered;" and we do admit that there is some truth in that exuberant panegyric.[3]

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[1] शास्ता समुद्रान्त वसुन्धरायाः यष्टाश्वमेधाद्य महाक्रतूनाम् ।
आदित्यसेनः प्रथितप्रभावो बभूव राजामरतुल्यतेजाः ॥
माध्यां विशाखापदसंयुतायां कृते युगे चोल पुरादपेत्य ।
महामणीनामयुतत्रयेण त्रिलक्ष चामीकरटङ्ककेन ॥
इष्टाश्वमेधत्रित येन दत्त्वा तुला सहस्रंहयकोटियुक्तम् !
श्रीकोष देव्या सहितो महिष्या अचीकरत्कीर्त्तिमिमां स मर्व्वम् ॥

[2] Cf. Hyderabad Grant; Gadval Grant; Honnur Grant. (*M. A. R.*, 1939, p. 134; *E. I.*, *X*, p. 100; *M. A. R.*, 1939, no. 30).

In sketching the history of Ādityasena, we cannot possibly lose sight of the fact that the Chinese ambassador, Wang-hiuen-tse, had twice come to India during his reign. His first visit during his reign was for the purposes of presenting precious offerings to the Bodhi Tree on behalf of Emperor Kao-Tsung, the successor of T'ai-Tsung and, at the same time, for bringing back to India a *Brāhmaṇa* named Nārāyaṇasvāmin, who had been sent to the Chinese court by some Indian king at the request of the Emperor of China.[4] The date of this visit may, approximately, be fixed in or about 657 A. D. About seven years later (c. 664 A.D.), he visited India once again under imperial orders to bring back with him to China a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Hiuan- chao, whom he had previously met in India.[5] The last two visits of Wang-hiuen-tse were undoubtedly in the reign of Ādityasena, and we presume

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1. *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 213, n.
2. Mandar Hill Rock Inscription; *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 212.
3. *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 204.
4. *Sino-Indian Studies*, i, pp. 69–70.
5. *Ibid.*

that the latter had provided all facilities to that Chinese ambassador as necessary under the circumstances.

Ādityasena was undoubtedly one of those fortunate rulers whose names have found mention in Chinese literature. Hwui Lun, a Korean Buddhist pilgrim, has referred to that Gupta monarch under the name of Jih-Kwan, i.e., 'Sun-army.' It may be translated into sanskrit as *Āditya-senā* which obviously stands for *Ādityasena*, the real name of the King. The Korean pilgrim has mentioned him in connection with the construction of a Buddhist temple at Bodhgaya. Whether it also suggests the Buddhist leanings of Ādityasena or not, is difficult to say, but we are indebted to a Chinese pilgrim, I-tsing, for supplying this interesting piece of information.[1]

(*c*) *Successors of Ādityasena*

The genealogy of the successors of Ādityasena has come to be recorded only in the Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jīvitagupta II. According to that inscription the successors of Ādityasena were Devagupta, and Vishṇugupta II.[2] It is also evident from the very same record that all of them claimed imperial dignity bearing such imperialistic titles as *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*. Unfortunately, however, for paucity of evidence, we do not know much of the history of their reign.

As stated above, the son and successor of Ādityasena was Devagupta, the third ruler in the house of the Later Guptas of Magadha. Since no dated record of this king has been found so far, we do not know for how many years he had actually ruled; but we will not be far from truth if we suggest that his reign terminated in or about c. 695 A.D., admitting that he had been on the throne for about twenty years, which is normal.

According to the Deo-Baranark Inscription, Devagupta was succeeded by bis son Vishṇugupta. From the same source

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1. I-tsing, *Kao-Fa-Kao-Sang-Chuen,* quoted by Beal in the Introduction to *Life*, p. xxxvi; *I.A.*, x, p. 110.
2. *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 215 ff.

we also learn that the mother of the latter was Ijjādevī who held the rank of *Mahādevī*. Evidently therefore, Vishṇugupta was the heir-apparent, being the son of the Chief-Queen. The aforesaid inscription does not record even a single important political event which had taken place in his reign and, as such, we presume that it was virtually an uneventful one. One thing about this ruler is certain and that is that he had a prosperous reign; but whether it was a long one or not is difficult to ascertain in the absence of any epigraphical record belonging to his time. That he had enjoyed a prosperous reign is suggested by the issue of his gold coins based on heavier *Suvarṇa* standard which, from the stand-point of purity, were in no way inferior to those of Narasiṁhagupta and Kumāragupta II. His gold coins in respect of *standard*, *fabric*, *style* and *type* bear a close semblance of those of the Imperial Guptas. On the reverse side we find the legend *Chandrāditya* which was undoubtedly the *āditya* title assumed by him in imitation of the practice of the Imperial Guptas so far as their coinage is concerned.[1] It is interesting to note that all his gold issues were recovered in Bihar and Bengal, over which he had actually ruled. For some reason or the other, this illustrious king did not issue silver or copper coins, probably because coins composed of those two metals which were issued previously by the Imperial Guptas were abundantly in circulation in his kingdom during his time. He seems to have ruled even after A.D. 700 and was succeeded by his son Jīvitagupta II, the last known king of the Later Gupta house of Magadha, as evidenced by the Deo-Baranark Inscription.

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[1] Allan, *C.C.Br.M.*, (Gupta Dynasty), pp. 145-6.

APPENDIX

The Family Of Mādhavagupta

Some scholars are of the opinion that the Gupta kings mentioned in the Aphsad Stone Inscription as also in the Deo-Baranark Inscription belonged to some ruling family of Magadha and not to Mālava while others maintain that the dynasty was originally of Mālava but was transplanted in to Magadha at the time of Mādhavagupta by Emperor Harsha for important political reasons. As will be seen, we have accepted the latter view as being more reasonable than the former, in consideration of the available positive evidence. Amongst the scholars who are the supporters of the former theory, the names of R.D. Banerji, R.C. Majumdar, R.G. Basak and B.P. Sinha stand prominent.[1] Scholars who have criticised their theories are A. F. R. Hoernle, C. V. Vaidya, R.K. Mookerji and H. C. Raychaudhari.[2] Arguments have been contradicted by counter arguments so deftly and systematically that a historian feels shy to walk over the same trodden ground once again. If we analyse properly the arguments for assuming that the predecessors of Ādityasena were the rulers of Magadha as given by Banerji and other scholars, it will be seen that they are purely negative in character and, as such, hypothetical. On the contrary, it will be noticed that those who favour the theory that the predecessors of Mādhavagupta were the rulers of Mālava, have at least taken their stand on some positive evidence, one of which may justly be considered to be the key to the solution of the problem.

The very basis of the theory of Banerji is that Mādhavagupta of the Aphsad Stone Inscription and his namesake mentioned by Bāṇa in the *Harshacharita*, are two different historical characters. Unfortunately, he has overlooked the fact that neither Bāṇa nor Hsuan Chuang has mentioned a second Mādhavagupta as being an ally of Harsha. In the Aphsad Stone Inscription, Mādhavagupta, father of Ādityasena, we have seen, has been specifically mentioned as being intimately connected with that Pushpabhūti Emperor. That Gupta ruler thus becomes a contemporary of Bāṇa who, as we know, graced the court of Harsha. Now in the *Harshacharita*, that celebrated poet has mentioned a number of high government officials of different ranks and also feudatory chiefs by their respective names in connection with different incidents in the life of his royal patron; and it is really strange that he totally forgot to mention in his work that loyal Gupta prince, although he came to be vested with full administrative powers to rule over the former territory of Śaśāṅka, the mortal enemy of Emperor Harsha and a potential danger to his empire. The omission of that name, therefore, is significant even though it does not go a great way towards the solution of our problem. Again, it is well-known to our readers that Hsuan Chuang, who had spent a number of years in Magadha, has actually mentioned by name three rulers of that kingdom, viz., Bālāditya, Śaśāṅka, the king of Gauḍa, and the Mauryan Chief Pūrṇavarman, a lineal descendant of Aśoka. When the knowledge of that Chinese pilgrim of the political condition of that kingdom, both before and during his time, was so thorough and accurate, one wonders why he has made no reference to Mādhavagupta in the same context, had he been an independent king of Magadha, at any rate before its occupation by Harsha. Besides, the extent of his kingdom in Eastern India was by no means insignificant ; and as he was considered to be an ally of Emperor Harsha, the absence of his name in the work of the Chinese pilgrim, though apparently minimises the importance of his work to a certain extent as a source of contemporary history, is really not so if we carefully consider the reason for the same. Hsuan Chuang, it will be seen, has mentioned the independent rulers of Magadha and not any one who was acting as the representative of the then suzerain power, Harsha. If Mādhavagupta had been really an independent ruler belonging to some Gupta family of Magadha, his name would have certainly found mention in the itinerary of the pilgrim. But because he knew that Gupta prince to be merely an administrator, he refrained from making any reference to him, as he had always done in his work, in respect of the contemporary political history of other States through which he had passed or where he had stayed for some time.

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[1] *J.B.O.R.S.*, xiv, 1928, pp. 254-65; R.C. Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 75; R.G. Basak, *History of North Eastern India*, p. 120; B.P. Sinha, *Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha*, pp. 133-56.

[2] A.F.R. Hoernle, *J.R.A.S.*, 1903, p. 561; C.V. Vaidya, *H.M.H.I.*, pp. 35, 328; R. K. Mookerji, *Harsha*, pp. 55-6; and H.C. Raychaudhari, *J.B.O.R.S.*, xv, 1929, p. 651 ff.

From our observations made above, it will be seen that Bāṇa knew only of one Mādhavagupta, and that he was the son of the then ruling king of Mālava. It will also be seen that Hsuan Chuang did not feel it necessary to refer to him by name, since that Gupta prince was merely acting as the viceroy of Harshavardhana. Thus, if we consider carefully the reasons that had led Bāṇa and Hsuan Chuang to make no mention of Mādhavagupta as an independent ruler of Magadha, the only fact which appears to us to be historically admissible is that he was a Mālava prince who was specially selected by the Pushpabhūti Emperor, because of his long intimacy with him, to administer on his behalf one of the most troublesome regions of his empire. Taking every aspect of the question into consideration it appears that the father of Ādityasena was the same Mālava prince Mādhavagupta who had spent a considerable portion of his life in association with the Pushpabhūti princes, like his elder brother Kumāragupta; and when Harshavardhana conquered the territories of Śaśāṅka lying to the west of the Ganges, he could not find any other suitable person than his old friend who had shared with him his feelings and sufferings. If we, therefore, take the political conditions of the times into consideration, we can only say that the appointment of Mādhavagupta as the viceroy of Magadha was one of the wisest acts of Emperor Harshavardhana. In view of the objections noted above, we find considerable difficulty in admitting the validity of the statement of Banerji—that there were two Mādhavaguptas, one of whom was the son of the king of Mālava and the other, the ruler of Magadha by his birth-right.

As regards the other argument of Banerji which he has put forward in favour of his theory that "it is impossible for that Mahāsenagupta who was the conqueror of Susthitavarman of Assam to be a king of Mālava simply because it was impossible for any king of Mālava to reach the banks of the Lauhitya without strenuous opposition from the kings of Kanauj, Magadha and Gauḍa as the route from Bhilsa or Eran lies through these countries and the inscription mentions Mahāsenagupta simply as the victor over Susthitavarman," we can only say that it is totally void of cogency. He has completely overlooked the fact that the Maukhari king Īśānavarman had conducted a similar campaign a little more than a decade ago and penetrated far into the east, passing through some of the territories which Mahāsenagupta also had to cross, in pursuance of his aggressive policies The exploits of Īśānavarman have been described in detail in his famous Haraha Stone Inscription; and it is a pity that Banerji had not taken the achievements of that Maukhari king into consideration.[1] What was possible for Īśānavarman, could possibly be so for Mahāsenagupta, since there was no special political development within that short time in Eastern India, which could have prevented the latter to take his army through the successive territories mentioned by that learned scholar. The argument of Banerji, is thus clearly fallacious, and, it should, as such, be ruled out.

The arguments of Banerji have been accepted by Majumdar and Basak but unfortunately they have adduced no reasons whatsoever for the same. We thus see no reason for considering Mādhavagupta to belong to some Gupta house of Magadha.

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[1] *E.I.*, xiv, p. 110 ff.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROYAL FAMILY OF GAUḌA

Sources for the History of the Reign of Śaśāṅka

The position of Śaśāṅka, like that of Emperor Yaśodharman, is unique in the history of Ancient India, in so far as both of them cannot be assigned to any particular lineage of kings known to us so far, even though there is no dearth of information about them in their own or contemporary records Broadly speaking, what we know about that Gauḍa king, has been actually supplied by contemporary literature, inscriptions and coins. Both Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hsuan Chuang have referred to him in their respective works which, in fact, throw a flood of light on the history of his reign. In addition to these, there are certain epigraphic records relating to him, which go a great way in supplementing what has been derived from the aforesaid literary works. Moreover, Śaśāṅka, being an independent ruler for a number of years, issued gold coins for the purpose of currency in his territory, and they too, have supplied certain interesting facts about the history of his reign. Incidental references to him in the *Harshacharita*, the *Saṅketa*, and the *Si-yu-ki*, as also in the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, reveal him to have undoubtedly been a very powerful king who pursued relentlessly the policy of establishing supremacy over the whole of the former Gupta Empire, even though the political conditions of his time were not favourable enough for the same. Some of the aforesaid works also throw much light on the extent of his kingdom, as we shall see hereafter. The discovery of the matrix of his seal, incised on the rock in the hill-fort at Rohtasgarh, may be considered to be an indication of the fact that it was built by him for purposes of defending the western frontiers of his territory and also perhaps to serve the purpose of a jumping-ground in his scheme of conquests of the powerful western kingdoms[1] Again, two copper-plate inscriptions were discovered recently near Midnapore, the historical value of which is yet to be properly assessed.[2] In addition to these, there is that famous Ganjam Copper-plate Inscription which throws sufficient light on the southern limits of his kingdom.[3] The coins which were issued by him are exclusively of gold and follow the *Suvarṇa* standard. They have been recovered mostly from the eastern parts of his kingdom. No silver or copper coins of this king have yet been found; and this fact gives rise to the supposition that he was not in favour of other varieties of metallic currency, because of the abundance of silver coins of the *Central Fabric* issued by the Imperial Guptas, and also of their copper coins which had remained in circulation in his territory even during his reign. It may be mentioned here that, in respect of purity, his gold coins stand on the same footing as those of the Later Imperial Guptas, to which they were equal also in respect of *standard* and *fabric*. His coin-types (*obv.* and *rev.*) are not only unique so far as their occurrence on the gold coins are concerned, but are also suggestive of certain interesting facts about him, as we shall see presently.

Problems Relating to the Family and Ancestry of Śaśāṅka

There are only a few characters in the history of Ancient India who stand alone and unrelated. They are men of dynamic personality, who after shining like the brightest meteor in the political firmament for a while, have totally disappeared leaving only a trail of glory behind. One such

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1. *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 283.

We are of opinion that the Rohtasgarh hill fort was originally built by Śaśāṅka, when he was ruling over Magadha as the *Mahāsāmanta*, in order to strengthen the western frontiers of his territories which were contiguous with those of the Maukharis. He already had a well-defended fort at Pāṭaliputra, but this one was situated on the eastern bank of the Son. He might have strengthened it further, because of its strategic position, and also with a view to making the western frontiers of his territory more secure.

2. *J.A.S.B. Letters*, xi, p. 1 ff.
3. *E I.*, vi, p. 143 ff.

historical figure is undoubtedly Emperor Yaśodharman (532-33 A.D.) and the other, king Śaśāṅka of Gauḍa, whatever might have been the reflections on his character and achievements made by contemporary writers, true or untrue. We know nothing of the family history of Śaśāṅka, but in all probability, he was a scion of the Imperial Gupta family.[1] He appeared in that line, when its glory was fast waning, a fact which made him work very hard for restoring the fallen fortunes of his family, as evidenced by the steps taken by him in that direction. Vainyagupta has been considered hitherto to be the last member of the royal house that was founded by Mahārāja-Srī-Gupta and also to have enjoyed imperial dignity.[2] This fact is more than evident from one of the seal-inscriptions discovered in the ruins at Nalanda.[3] He was, in our opinion, succeeded by King Ghaṭotkachagupta, whom we consider to be the predecessor of Śaśāṅka. One of our reasons for considering Śaśāṅka to be an offshoot of the Imperial Gupta house is that a particular royal court tradition mentions him as Narendragupta which was undoubtedly

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1. The main reason of our surmise that Śaśāṅka belonged to the Imperial Gupta House is his other name '*Narendragupta*' which has been brought to our notice by Śaṅkara, the commentator on the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa. We do not know from which source he has derived this information, but it appears to be based on the court-traditions of the Imperial Guptas, which were available to him. It may be noted here that the *Devīchandraguptam* was written by Viśākhadatta on the basis of the same traditions which obviously were handed down by the court-poets or the royal bards from generation to generation. We do not see any reason for disbelieving the *alias* of Śaśāṅka as recorded by that commentator, although we admit that he is the only authority mentioning the same. If 'Narendragupta' was really one of the names of Śaśāṅka, then the second part of it, i.e., Gupta, would naturally lead us to connect him with the Imperial Gupta House or with the feudatory Gupta family of Mālava, the former being more probable than the latter. We have fully discussed this piont elsewhere (see also p. 146, n. 1)
2. Cf. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, i. p. 52.
3. Sastri, *Nālandā and its Epigraphic Material* (*M.A.S.I.*, No. 66), p. 67; see also Gunaighar Copper-plate Inscription of Vainyagupta (*I.H.Q.*, 1930, p. 53 ff).

his other name.[1] At any rate, the courrency of two names side by side for the same monarch of the Imperial Gupta family is not unusual. Some of the early Gupta emperors were known by two names and even by three. Thus, if Śaśāṅka's *alias* was Narendragupta, a name which he had to bear, because of the house to which he belonged, there can possibly be no wonder. We cannot, however, consider him to be the son of Vainyagupta (188 G.E.) in view of the fact that the latter was a contemporary of Emperor Bhānugupta (191 G.E.) and very probably, his son. After a critical comparison of the chronology of the different ruling families which had played an important role when the Hūṇas were engaged in dealing death and destruction in Mālava, we find a rather long gap between the time of Vainyagupta and Śaśāṅka which amounts to more than five decades in which the latter cannot be placed.[2] In all probability, to that chronological lacuna, belongs Ghaṭotkachagupta, whose gold coins have been modelled after those of the Later Imperial Guptas. Since Narendragupta *alias* Śaśāṅka was a scion of the Imperial Gupta house, as evidenced by the second part of his name, and since he cannot be considered to have come to the throne later than 595 A.D., i.e., eleven years before Harsha assumed the reigns of government, we do not see any possibility of placing him immediately after Vainyagupta or even after Emperor Yaśodharman who ruled over the entire Gupta empire and also over the territories conquered by the

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[1] Bühler, *E.I.*, i, p. 70; *H.C.*, p. 275.

[2] The only known date in the history of the reign of Emperor Yaśodharman has come to be recorded in his Mandasor Inscription of *Vikrama Saṁvat*, which corresponds to A.D. 532-33 (*current*). Our calculations show that Śaśāṅka, very probably, came to the throne as the *Mahāsāmanta* in the year 595 A.D. The intervening period between those two dates amounts to 63 years. We, therefore, have, reasons to believe that between the time of Yaśodharman and that of the *Mahāsāmanta* Śaśāṅka there was a gap which under no circumstances would be less than five decades. In our opinion, it was during this period that Vainyagupta and Ghaṭotkachagupta had ruled. We are also of the opinion that it was Vainyagupta who was defeated by Yaśodharman, but regained his independence on the death of the latter.

Hūṇas in Western India at least up to 540 or 541 A.D.[1] It is for this reason that we consider ourselves to be justified in assuming that there was another Gupta emperor preceding Śaśāṅka and he might have been Ghaṭotkachagupta who struck gold coins on the basis of the *Suvarṇa* standard, of which only one so far has come to light.[2]

The history of Eastern India, after the death of Emperor Yaśodharman up to the accession of Śaśāṅka, is no less obscure than the other so-called Dark Ages in the political history of Northern India. Chronologically, this period lasted roughly from c. 540 to 5 5 A.D. It is because of this reason that it is almost impossible to say anything definitely either about the family or about the ancestry of Śaśāṅka who was undoubtedly a very conspicuous figure in the last quarter of the sixth and the earlier part of the seventh century. His fame was indubitably eclipsed by the political achievements of Harsha; but there is no doubt that the former was as formidable an enemy of the latter as the Chālukyan monarch Pulakesin II. W

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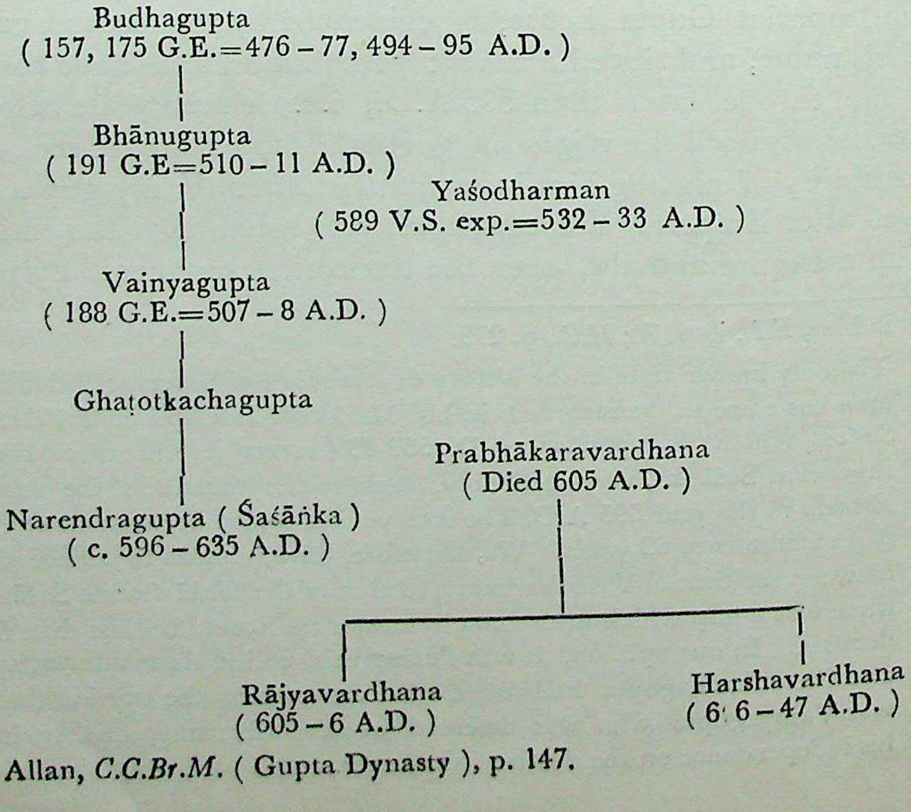
Budhagupta
(157, 175 G.E.=476 – 77, 494 – 95 A.D.)
Bhānugupta
(191 G.E=510 – 11 A.D.)
Yaśodharman
(589 V.S. exp.=532 – 33 A.D.)
Vainyagupta
(188 G.E.=507 – 8 A.D.)
Ghaṭotkachagupta
Prabhākaravardhana
(Died 605 A.D.)
Narendragupta (Śaśāṅka)
(c. 596 – 635 A.D.)
Rājyavardhana
(605 – 6 A.D.)
Harshavardhana
(6 6 – 47 A.D.)

2. Allan, *C.C.Br.M.* (Gupta Dynasty), p. 147.

have seen above, that the sources throw little or no light on the history of his family or ancestry and, therefore, we will have to satisfy ourselves by making only a few observations about them, which we consider to be cogent or relevant. It has already been mentioned by us that he was a scion of the Imperial Gupta family, on the ground that he has been specifically mentioned as Narendragupta in a manuscript of the *Harshacharita*. We do not consider Allan to be justified in correcting the reading 'Narendragupta', as read by Bühler, to ,Narendrāditya', merely because there are some gold coins which bear that name on the *reverse*.[1] That learned numismatist observes: "It is possible that the true reading of Bühler's manuscript is *Narendrāditya* and we should thus be able to attribute to Śaśāṅka one at least of the coins which bear the title *Narendrāditya* on the *reverse*." A fact of prime importance which has been overlooked by Allan is that the gold coins having the legend *Narendrāditya* on the reverse do not bear either the name of Śaśāṅka in full or his initial *Śa* on the obverse.[2] It is for this reason that the coins inscribed with that *āditya*-title on the reverse should be considered to have been issued by any ruler other than Śaśāṅka. In view of this numismatic datum, we do not see any reason why Allan should consider the title '*Narendrāditya*,' occurring on the reverse of a particular gold coin of some unknown king, to be the name of Śaśāṅka and even go a step further and propose a correction in the reading 'Narendragupta' as accepted by Bühler. A critical examination of the gold coins, on the reverse of which the title '*Narendrāditya*' occurs, does not show in the least that they were issued by Śaśāṅka. Thus, '*Narendrāditya*', either as an *alias* or as the title of that ruler, should be completely ruled out; and accepting that the reading '*Narendragupta*' as adopted by Bühler to be correct, we should consider Śaśāṅka to be a scion of the Gupta family having intimate relationship with Vainyagupta and Ghaṭotkachagupta of the Imperial Gupta house or with Mahāsenagupta of the Mālava royal family, the former being more probable than the latter.[1]

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[1] Smith, *C. C. I. M.*, i, p. 122; Allan, *C. C. Br. M.* (Gupta Dynasty), pp. 149–50.

[2] Allan, *C. C. Br. M.* (Gupta Dynasty), pp. 149–50.

It may be noted here that each of the two coins inscribed with the legend *Narendrāditya* on the reverse has three separate monosyllabic characters inscribed on the obverse. In one of them we undoubtedly find *S* but not *Śa* as on the obverse of the coins bearing the name of Śaśāṅka. Majumdar, therefore, considers that the gold coin which bears the monosyllabic letter *S* on the obverse and the legend *Narendrāditya* on the reverse, was issued by a king of Eastern India named Samāchāradeva (*Classical Age*, p. 77). This attribution is certainly much more probable than the one proposed by Allan.

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[1] Vaidya mentions him as "Śaśāṅka Gupta" or "Narendragupta." According to him, he belonged to "a branch of the Gupta imperial line" which ruled in Gauḍa (*History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, i, pp. 3, 30, 327). FitzEdward Hall considers him to be a descendant of the "Gupta family" but of which one,—he has not specifically mentioned (*Vāsavadattā*, p. 52). Majumdar and Raychaudhari, however, are of opinion that there is hardly any justification for the belief that he was connected with the Guptas (*History of Bengal*, i, p. 59; *P. H. A. I.*, p. 514, n. 3; see also Allan, *C. C. Br. M.*, Gupta Dynasty, p. lxiv). Mookerji opines that he was perhaps a Gupta, either a son or nephew of Mahāsenagupta (*Harsha*, p. 71). Banerji entirely agrees with Mookerji, while Vidyāvinoda takes him to be the son of Mahāsenagupta (*Bāṅgalār Itihāsa*, i, p. 105; *Kāmarūpa-Śāsanāvalī*, p. 85). Basak and Sinha have come to the conclusion that there was some sort of close relationship between Śaśāṅka and Jayanāga. According to the former, Jayanāga and his son preceded Śaśāṅka as kings of Karṇasuvarṇa while, according to the latter, "the one followed the other almost immediately" (*H.N.E.I.*, p. 140: *The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha*, p. 229). Bhattasali thinks that Śaśāṅka belonged to the family of Samāchāradeva of East Bengal [*J. A. S. B.* (N. S.), xix, Num. sup., p. 54 ff.]. Gosavi, on the other hand, has suggested that he may be a prince of the Varman Dynasty, probably a cousin of Bhāskaravarman (*J. A. R. S.*, ii, p. 12).

In the present state of our knowledge, nothing can be said definitely about the family or the ancestry of '*Mahārājādhirāja*' Śaśāṅka; and it would be certainly wrong on our part to connect him with any ruling family of Eastern India, because of the paucity of evidence relating to either of them. It is for this reason that his connection with Jayanāga, Samāchāradeva, Dharmāditya, and other rulers of Eastern India is completely out of place. More difficult, perhaps, is to connect him either with Mahāsenagupta of the Mālava family or with Bhāskaravarman of the royal house of Kāmarūpa, who had played an important part in the historical events of Harsha's reign. If, however, we admit that Narendragupta was an *alias* of Śaśāṅka, on the basis of

There is indeed not the slightest indication whereby we can connect Śaśāṅka with any other particular royal family, except with that of the Imperial Guptas and that, too, on the basis of the second name borne by him, viz., *Narendragupta*, if really it bears any historical import. If he had really belonged to the line of Ghaṭotkachagupta, whom we consider to have been the immediate successor of *Mahārājādhirāja* Vainyagupta, then there is some possibility, at least chronologically, of considering him to be a lineal descendant of the former and also perhaps to have been his son and successor. With regard to the question as to why the gold coins of Śaśāṅka differ from those of the Imperial Guptas in respect of the *obverse* type, we can only say that, being a staunch Śaiva, he preferred to have his tutelary deity portrayed on the *obverse* rather than figuring himself, as was the numismatic practice of the time. During the period in question the *Tāntrika* form of Śaivism was extremely popular in the regions over which he came to rule; and there can be no wonder if his choice was for the representation of the supreme deity of that cult, rather than follow the stereotyped method of portraying the issuer on the *obverse*, whatever be the form of it, *dhanurdhara*, *śaktidhara* and the like.[1] The depiction of the *abhisheka* of Lakshmī on the *reverse* side of his coins also need not surprise us in view of the fact that, on the gold coins (*rev.*) of the Imperial Guptas, we find a variety of such deities, male or female. It would be wrong to suppose that he had derived that *rev.* type from the coins of the Indo-Scythian king Azilises, on which it is to be met with for the first time.[2] The concept of the *abhisheka* of Lakshmī is purely

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the authority cited obove, we are in no way unjustified in connecting him with the Imperial Gupta family.

[1] It is interesting to note that his alleged predecessor, Vainyagupta, who ruled over Bengal, also seems to have been a Śaiva, as is indicated by the fact that his seal attached to a copper-plate discovered at Gunaighar, bears the figure of a recumbent bull in relief. The invocation to Śiva in that epigraph further strengthens our suspicion that he, too, was a staunch Śaiva like Śaśāṅka.

भगवन्महादेव-पादानुध्यातो महाराज श्रीवैन्यगुप्तः ।

(*I. H. Q.*, vi, p. 53 ff).

[2] Whitehead, *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, i, p. 135.

a Vedic one; and a reference to it is to be found in one of the hymns contained in the *Bālakhilya* section of the *Ṛigveda*.[1] It is undoubtedly true that the representation of a deity, exclusively on the *obverse* side, is not to be met with on the gold coins of the Imperial Guptas, and, as such, its occurrence on those of Śaśāṅka is a clear testimony to the novelty of his ideas in respect of coinage. Thus, Śaśāṅka's gold coins do neither prove nor disprove his connection with the Imperial Guptas; and unless and until fresh epigraphic evidence be forthcoming, in our opinion, it would be better to consider him to be a scion of the Imperial Gupta house on the basis of the literary evidence noticed above.

Political Career of Śaśāṅka as Mahāsāmanta

It is really unfortunate that the first appearance of Śaśāṅka in history was in the role of a murderer. We are told in the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa that, by making certain false promises, he managed to bring Rājyavardhana to his camp where he stabbed him to death.[2] Nothing has been specifically mentioned in that work about the real nature of the allurement which made the deceased Pushpabhūti king to fall in the trap of that wily Gauḍa ruler; but, it is true that the assassination of the former actually shattered the political ambition of the latter and even ruined his political career, as the subsequent history of the period shows. Some light has been thrown by the aforesaid Rohtasgarh Seal Matrix Inscription which brings to our notice that he was a *Mahāsāmanta* in the earlier period of his life.[1] Judging by the significance of that title and its contemporary usage, it may be said that he was a feudatory king of the highest rank of some more powerful ruler. It is, however, difficult to say with any amount of certainty whose vassal-chief he was. The presumption is that he might have been a feudatory chief of the highest order of the Maukhari king Avantivarman, who undoubtedly was his contemporary.[2] That Avantivarman had exercised political

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[1] आर्द्रां पुष्करिणीं पुष्टीं सुवर्णां हेममालिनीम् ।
चन्द्रां हिरण्यमयीं लक्ष्मीं जातवेदो ममा वह ॥

—ऋग्वेद, खिलसूक्त 2. 6. 14.

आर्द्रामार्द्रङ्गिा पुष्करिणीमभिषेकोद्युक्त दिग्गजशुण्डाग्राम् ।

—Sāyaṇa's commentary on the above verse.

For the sculptural representation of the *abhisheka* of Lakshmī we would like to draw the attention of our readers to the depiction of that theme on the railings of the Bharhut and the Sanchi *Stūpas* (Barua, *Bharhut*, iii, pl. xxx, No. 23; Marshall, *Sanchi and Its Monuments*, iii, pl. lxxxviii, 76b; xc, 85b; xcviii; cii) which may be ascribed to the 2nd Cent. B. C.

[2] *H. C.*, p. 178.
गौडाधिपेन मिथ्योपचारोपचितविश्वासं मुक्तशस्त्रमेकाकिनं विश्रब्धं स्वभवन एव भ्रातरं व्यापादितमश्रौषीत् ।

—Text, p. 186.

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[1] *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 283. श्रीमहासामन्त शशाङ्क देवस्य ।

In this context we would like to draw the attention of scholars to some observations made by Chattopadhyaya in respect of Śaśāṅka's position as a *Mahāsāmanta*. That learned scholar observes that "it is not unlikely that the Rohtasgarh seal matrix was executed when Śaśāṅka became a subordinate ruler under the great Vardhana emperor" (*Early History of North India*, p. 278). We regret our inability to accept the suggestion of Chattopadhyaya for two reasons viz. :

(i) It is a fact that Śaśāṅka was directly or indirectly connected with the murder of Rājyavardhana and Grahavarman which had taken place prior to the accession of Harsha in A. D. 606. The man responsible for the murder of these two nearest and dearest relations of Harsha certainly cannot be expected to serve under him as his vassal chief; and

(ii) referring to the political trouble which Harsha had to face on coming to the throne, Bāṇabhaṭṭa in his *Harshacharita* has referred to the "wicked king of Gauḍa" as one of the bitterest enemies of his royal patron; and he cannot but be Śaśāṅka whose connection with the Gauḍa kingdom has remained undisputed so far. How the wicked king of Gauḍa, implicated in the murder of Rājyavardhana and Grahavarman with king Devagupta as his helping hand, could be rewarded by offering Mahāsāmantaship to him by Emperor Harsha, passes our comprehension !

[2] Cf. Ganguly, *I. H. Q.*, xii, p. 457; Sen, *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, p. 261.

Some scholars have expressed very divergent views on the early status of Śaśāṅka. Majumdar thinks that he was a feudatory of Mahāsenagupta (*History of Bengal*, i, p. 59). Vasu is of opinion that the Gauḍa king, who killed Rājyavardhana, was Narendragupta and Śaśāṅka was his *Mahāsāmanta* (*J. A. R. S.*, i, p. 97). Sinha has made supremacy over a considerable portion of Magadha, is evident from the Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jīvitagupta II, wherein it has been specifically mentioned that the Maukhari king in question had made some land-grant in favour of the god *Varuṇa-svāmin* and confirmed the same by issuing a royal charter.[1] Unless he had been actually ruling over Magadha, it would not have been possible for him to exercise his royal prerogative in that manner.[2] Śaśāṅka's emergence in political his-

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three suggestions, viz., (1) Śaśāṅka was appointed as *Mahāsāmanta* of Magadha by Jayanāga, (2) Śaśāṅka was the *Yuvarāja* of Jayanāga and was associated with his government and (3) Śaśāṅka may have been a usurper of the throne of Jayanāga (*Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha*, pp. 233–4). Barua has made the novel suggestion that Mahāsenagupta conquered Bengal from the king of Kāmarūpa and appointed Śaśāṅka as *Mahāsāmanta* over the newly conquered regions (*Early History of Kāmarūpa*, pp. 58–59). He seems to have completely overlooked the fact that Śaśāṅka is known to have ruled as *Mahāsāmanta* over Magadha and not over Bengal. Ray has also made similar suggestion but, according to him, Śaśāṅka was the *Mahāsāmanta* of Bhāskaravarman (*I. H. Q.*, ii, p. 775). We, however, have no available data to consider him as such.

[1] *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 218.

Deo-Baranark, ancient Vārunīka, is a village about 25 miles south-west of Arrah, chief town of the Shahabad District, South Bihar.

[2] Majumdar has questioned the theory that Avantivarman was in possession of Magadha. According to him, "the probability is that Mahāsenagupta must have conquered Magadha, as otherwise he could hardly have proceeded up to the Brahmaputra river" (*History of Bengal*, i, p. 59, n. 2). We are of the opinion that Mahāsenagupta led an expedition to Eastern India, when he was at the height of his power; but the whole region, extending up to the river Lauhitya, was not actually conquered by him permanently. During the later period of his reign, he was even forced to send his two young sons to the court of Prabhākaravardhana for their safety, which shows that, politically, his position was not very secure. In view of these facts, it is difficult to believe that the vast area, extending from Mālava up to the Lauhitya, including Magadha (which was overrun by his army), was actually under his suzerainty for a considerable period of time. The expedition led by Mahāsenagupta as far as the river Brahmaputra, through Magadha, was undoubtedly an important political event which might have taken place in the later period of the reign of Sarvavarman, the weakest of the Maukhari rulers of Kānyakubja; but politically, it was

tory was not really in the capacity of a wily confidence-trickster and murderer but as a feudatory chief of superior order, subservient to some powerful ruler whom we consider to be the aforesaid Maukhari suzerain monarch whose contemporary undoubtedly he was.

Śaśāṅka's Strategy For Gaining Political Supremacy

It is yet to be established with the help of some reliable datum, literary or epigraphic, that Śaśāṅka had actually entered into a conspiracy with Devagupta with the intention of exterminating the royal houses of the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis, even though that suspicion has somehow gained ground. He undoubtedly came to Kānyakubja with a definite political purpose. Taking into consideration the circumstances in which the Maukhari kingdom was placed, through the death of Prabhākaravardhana and Grahavarman Maukhari, the Gauḍa king appears to have been seized with the desire of wresting that territory from the hands of Devagupta, in pursuance of his aggressive policy, and ruling over it himself. But his scheme received a complete setback when Rājyavardhana marched against the usurper Devagupta and succeeded in killing him on the battle-field in a fair fight. The death of Devagupta virtually brought to an end the Mālava supremacy over the Maukhari kingdom. The success of Rājyavardhana was a warning to Śaśāṅka which made the latter change the course of his preconceived plans. Since he considered that young and inexperienced Pushpabhūti king to be the real obstacle in the fulfilment of his political ambition, he made up his mind to remove him completely from his path leading towards the achievement of that purpose by fair means or foul. He, therefore, invited him to his camp and treacherously murdered him. Had Śaśāṅka been in league with Devagupta, Rājyavardhana would never have fallen in his trap. As there was not the slightest suspicion in the mind

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of little or no consequence, since Avantivarman, as it appears, spared no time in retrieving the lost possessions of his family (Aphsad Ins. of Ādityasena, *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 200) as evidenced by the Deo-Baranark Inscription.

of that deceased king about the ulterior motive of Śaśāṅka, he was easily enticed, entrapped and ultimately killed.[1] It was indeed, a great blunder also on the part of the ministers, who had accompanied Rājyavardhana, to have allowed him to go to the camp of Śaśāṅka, without adequate protection. The failure on the part of all those government officials was reported to Harsha in due course and was strongly criticised by other ministers who were then with him at Sthāneśvara. We owe this interesting piece of information to the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Chuang.[2] If this be a fact, as we believe, it clearly shows that neither Rājyavardhana nor his political advisers had the slightest suspicion about the real intention of that wicked king of Gauḍa.

As stated above, this political murder resorted to by Śaśāṅka for the fulfilment of his cherished desire of becoming the undisputed monarch of the whole of Āryāvarta, completely ruined his career. His dream, unfortunately, never came to pass because of his miscalculation of the military strength of the Pushpabhūtis. He realised it fully when Harsha took the command himself and directed his army against Gauḍa with the avowed intention of wreaking vengeance for the murder of his elder brother. The Gauḍa king took to flight and completely disappeared from the political arena and was never heard of again. According to the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, Śaśāṅka was ordered by Harsha not to move out of his territory and that this order of the newly crowned Pushpabhūti Emperor was carried out by the Gauḍa king.[1] But absolute reliance cannot be placed on the information contained in the aforesaid Buddhist work, as we shall see below.

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[1] If Rājyavardhana had even any unconfirmed report or mere suspicion that Śaśāṅka was an ally of Devagupta or that his intention was to occupy the Maukhari throne, he would not have made the blunder firstly, of sending a major portion of his army back to Sthāneśvara under Bhaṇḍi after the defeat of Devagupta and, secondly, of visiting the camp of that Gauḍa king unarmed and with only a few attendants (*H. C.*, pp. 223–5). In that case, the Pushpabhūti king would have approached Kānyakubja at the head of his army, ready for battle, and not with a small retinue, as he appears to have done. After the defeat of the king of Mālava, the possibility of suspicion of another war was not even in his mind. This reflects upon the shrewdness and tactfulness with which Śaśāṅka had played his cards.

[2] Beal, *Records*, i, pp. 210–11.

Julien's translation of the passage in question is as follows : "But by the incapacity of his (Rājyavardhana's) ministers, he has gone and fallen under the sword of his enemy; that has been a great disgrace to the realm. It is we who are to blame."

(*I. A.*, vii, p. 197).

Political Career of Śaśāṅka as Mahārājādhirāja

At this stage, we are confronted with a problem of no mean magnitude relating to the reign of Śaśāṅka as an independent ruler. Since he bore the title *Mahāsāmanta* as evidenced by the aforesaid Rohtasgarh Seal Matrix Inscription mentioned above, in the earlier part of his political career, he was very probably a vassal chief, of superior rank, of some paramount sovereign. Taking into consideration the political condition of the Ganges Valley towards the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century A.D., we have also suggested above that he might have been a feudatory of the Maukhari king Avantivarman. Our presumption is that in the capacity of a *Mahāsāmanta* he was ruling over a considerable portion of the eastern part of Northern India, which most certainly comprised Magadha. From the *Si-yu-ki* of Hsuan Chuang, it clearly appears that all his misdeeds as a ruler were confined to the region stretching from the River Son to the Ganges over which he may be considered to have ruled in that capacity.

A fact of prime importance which we cannot possibly ignore or lose sight of is that, while his rule as a *Mahāsāmanta* has been confirmed by the Rohtasgarh Seal Matrix Inscription, even if we leave aside the evidence of the *Si-yu-ki* as of dubious historical value, the other lines of evidence which are undoubtedly more in number, bear sufficient testimony to the fact that, towards the latter part of his political career, he was an independent king.[1] We would not be far from truth if we admit that at some period of his life he exercised paramountcy over Eastern India, if we critically assay some of the available senil of evidence with a view to finding out their real historical significance. That he was an ambitious king, bent upon extending the frontiers of his kingdom, is beyond cavil. He might have become independent presumably after the death of Avantivarman (c. 602 A.D.), and since then up to his death, he appears to have ruled independently. The available lines of evidence in question are his own epigraphs and coins which are of immense historical value in so far as his suzerainty is concerned. The aforesaid Midnapore Copper Plate Inscriptions, apart from the eulogistic phrases contained therein, point undoubtedly to his independent rule, particularly over the southern part of Bengal, although it is difficult to guess how long it lasted, since no information about the same is preserved in them. Likewise, the Ganjam Copper-plate Inscription of his feudatory Mādhavarāja II styles his overlord *Mahārājādhirāja* and himself, *Mahārāja* and *Mahāsāmanta*.[2] We have, therefore, no hesitation to admit that it reflects his overlordship definitely in Vaṅga and Kaliṅga, stretching probably as far as the river Godavari in the South.

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[1] *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, verse 725.

पराजयामास सोमाख्यं दुष्टकर्मानुचारिणम् ।
ततो निषिद्धः सोमाख्यो स्वदेशेनावतिष्ठतः ॥

The historical information supplied by the above mentioned inscriptions has been, to a large extent, supported by his gold coins which none but an independent ruler of some consequence could have issued in those days. Even if we leave aside the evidence of his inscriptions, his gold coinage alone woule have borne ample testimony of his rule as an independent king. There is not a single instance in the history of Ancient Indian numismatics, from the beginning of the Kushāṇa period up to the end of the Pāla supremacy in Northern India, that a feudatory chief, whether a *Sāmanta* or a *Mahāsāmanta*, had issued gold or even silver coins. It would be a serious historical blunder on our part if we ignore or overlook the significance of this important fact so far as the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka is concerned. His gold coins bear undoubted testimony to his independent rule and their discovery mostly in Bengal suggests his sway over that region.

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[1] Ray also has arrived at the same conclusion but has made the fantastic suggestion that, during the early period of his life, Śaśāṅka was an independent king who was "afterwards defeated by the combined forces of Bhaṇḍi and Bhāskaravarman and probably it was then that the Rohtasgarh Seal was inscribed which speaks of him as a '*Mahāsāmanta*.' But some time before 619–20 A. D. he must have thrown off the yoke of vassalage and become an independent king, '*Mahārājādhirāja* Śaśāṅka'." (*I. H. Q.*, iii, 1927, p. 775).

[2] *E. I.*, vi, p. 143.

The fact that Śaśāṅka was a sovereign power in Eastern India, is altogether free from doubt, even though his inscriptions and coins do not suggest clearly the duration of the period for which he had exercised political supremacy. The question, therefore, that arises is: when did he rule independently over Vaṅga and Kaliṅga as suggested by his own inscriptions and coins along with the data supplied by the aforesaid Chinese work ? It is no easy affair to answer this question in a satisfactory manner, but there is no doubt that between the death of Avantivarman and the invasion of his territory by Harsha, Śaśāṅka's political supremacy over those divisions of Eastern India may be considered to be an established fact, in view of the lines of evidence cited above. In our opinion, the period of his. independent rule cannot be less than two decades, but under no circumstance it can be more than three decades. According to our computations, Avantivarman died about 602 A.D., and in the same year his son Grahavarman ascended the throne. It is evident from the Ganjam Copper Plate Inscription that Śaśāṅka's authority had remained undisputed up to at least A.D. 619, the year in which that charter was issued. The two aforesaid Midnapore Copper Plate Inscriptions do not help us much in this direction although they go a great way in proving the fact that Śaśāṅka was an independent ruler of Vaṅga at that time. We cannot, however, consider him to be ruling later than A.D. 637, when Hsuan Chuang was in Karṇasuvarṇa, because of the fact that the pilgrim has, in a way, referred to the end of Śaśāṅka's political authority in that province shortly before his visit. We are, therefore, of the opinion that the death of that king took place sometime before the pilgrim visited the Gauḍa kingdom.

Tentatively, however, we may accept A.D. 635 as the year of his death, since Hsuan Chuang has alluded to him as "the recent king."[1] Thus, from every point of view it clearly appears to us that Śaśāṅka did get the opportunity of ruling independently for at least three decades. We are extremely sorry to admit that Śaśāṅka's political career and achievements have not been correctly represented by modern historians because perhaps his fame was eclipsed by his more powerful contemporary, Harshavardhana, whom both he and the Chālukyan monarch Pulakeśin II evidently considered a powerful rival.

We have stated above that in the earlier period of his political career, Śaśāṅka might have been a feudatory of the Maukhari king Avantivarman. That the Gauḍa kingdom had passed into the hands of the Maukharis, is more than evident from the Haraha Stone Inscription of the Maukhari king Īśānavarman (A.D. 554), in which it has been specifically mentioned that he had subjugated the Gauḍas.[2] This, undoubtedly, is a clear indication of the fact that the kingdom of the Gauḍas had been annexed by him.[3] In our opinion, the Gauḍa kingdom was the only remnant of the truncated Gupta Empire since c. 590 A.D., and it was ruled over by the scions of the Imperial Gupta family after the time of Emperor Vainyagupta. The three main reasons which had brought about the downfall of the political surpremacy of the Imperial

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1. Watters, ii, pp. 92, 115.
2. *E. I.*, xiv, p. 110.
3. The Aphsad Stone Inscription brings to our notice that Mahāsenagupta had extended his victorious arms as far as the river Lauhitya. Admitting this to be a fact, we can only say that the sovereign sway of the Gupta King of Mālava over South Bihar and the central parts of Vaṅga was indeed a short-lived one since it is apparent from the Deo-Baranark Inscription that the Maukhari king Avantivarman had ruled over a considerable portion of Magadha. Mahāsenagupta was a contemporary of Sarvavarman, who was possibly the weakest king of the Maukhari house. Evidently, therefore, the lost Maukhari territories in the East had been reconquered from the Guptas of Mālava by Avantivarman, who also may be considered to be a later contemporary of Mahāsenagupta, being also a contemporary of Prabhākaravardhana.

Guptas and had considerably reduced the extent of their empire in Eastern India, are (1) the temporary annexation of the whole eastern region extending as far as the River Lauhitya by Yaśodharman to his empire, (2) the extensive conquests made in the East by the Maukhari king Īśānavarman, and (3) the military campaigns of Mahāsenagupta as far as the River Lauhitya, through the former Gupta Empire. Available information from the inscription of these rulers bears ample testimony to these facts. Briefly speaking, about the year 555 A.D., the supremacy of the Imperial Gupta house virtually became confined to the small Gauḍa kingdom lying between the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, till Śaśāṅka extended its frontiers by conquering some neighbouring territories and thereby partly retrieving the lost possessions of that family, to which he probably belonged. When Śaśāṅka came to rule, he actually did so in the capacity of a feudatory chief, although he was given control of Magadha, in addition to his ancestral territories by his liege-lord, Avantivarman. It was in view of these facts, as stated above, that Śaśāṅka styled himself *Mahāsāmanta*, which, in our opinion, is indicative of a rank higher than that of an ordinary feudatory (*Sāmanta*). Avantivarman might have conferred on Śaśāṅka that honour, taking perhaps into consideration his noble lineage and administrative abilities. Whatever the case may be, it is a fact that at the time when the royal houses of the Pushpabhūtis and the Maukharis were wading through a sea of troubles, Śaśāṅka was exercising supremacy from at least the River Son to the Brahmaputra as is borne out by available literary and epigraphic evidence.[1] He destroyed the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya and ordered that the image of the Buddha from a neighbouring temple be removed and replaced by one of Śiva, because of his hostility to Buddhism, as we are told by Hsuan Chuang.[1] Actuated by the very same spirit, he also threw into the Ganges a slab of stone enshrined in a temple at Pāṭaliputra, which bore, according to tradition, the foot-prints of of the Buddha.[2] Incidentally, it may be mentioned here,

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[1] As stated above, the rise of Śaśāṅka was extremely rapid and was attained before he came in conflict with the Maukharis and the Pushpabhūtis. This is covertly alluded to by Bāṇa, when he refers to the 'rise of the clear-flecked moon (Śaśāṅka) like the pointed hump of Śiva's tame bull in the firmament' after the death of Prabhākaravardhana (*H. C.*, p. 168).

प्रकटकलङ्कमुदयमानं विशङ्कट विषाणोत्कीर्णपङ्कसंकरशंकरशकुर शक्करककुदकूटसंकाशमकाशताकाशेशशाङ्कमण्डलम् ।

—Text, p. 178.

The word *maṇḍalam* in the passage is significant. It means that Śaśāṅka was ruling at the head of a circle of vassal kings. In this connection, we may also note that Bāṇa has nowhere referred to Śaśāṅka by his name in the *Harshacharita*. We, therefore, agree with the commentator that the word used for the moon (*Śaśāṅka*) actually refers to the Gauḍa king of that name (Text, p. 175; *H.C.*, p. 275) in a disguised manner as already mentioned. The reference to the Moon, Śiva and the Bull in the passage in connection with Śaśāṅka also recalls to our mind the coins of that king which bear the figures of all these three on the *obv.* side. Cf. Allan, *C. C. Br. M.* (Gupta Dynasty), pp. 147–8.

[1] Watters, ii, pp. 115–6; Beal, *Records*, ii, pp. 118, 121–2.

[2] Watters, ii, p. 92.

In this connection, it may be noted here that Hsuan Chuang has already recorded the fact that Śaśāṅka exterminated Buddhism and expelled the Buddhists from a Vihāra in Kuśīnārā (*ibid*, p. 43). *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* also records that Śaśāṅka, an unparalleled hero, will become king and that he will destroy images of the Buddha, burn holy relics and break monasteries and shrines (*The Imperial History of India*, pp. 49–50).

सोमाख्योऽपि ततोराजा एक वीरो भविष्यति ।
गङ्गातीर पर्यन्तं वाराणस्यामतः परम् ॥
नाशयिष्यति दुर्मेधः शास्तुर्बिम्बां मनोरमाम् ।
जिनैस्तु कथितं पूर्वं धर्मसेतुमनल्पकम् ॥
दाहापयति दुर्मेधः तीर्त्थिकस्यत्रचे रतः ।
ततोऽसौ क्रुद्धलुब्धस्तु मिथ्यामानी ह्यसंमतः ॥
विहारारामं चैत्यांश्च निर्गन्थां वसथां भुवि ।
भेत्स्यते च तदा सर्वां वृत्तिरोधमकारक ॥

(Text, p. 53.)

Some scholars are of opinion that the extermination of Buddhism caused by Śaśāṅka was due to political exigencies as the Buddhists in Magadha and other parts of his kingdom were helping Harshavardhana with whom he was at war (Banerji, *Bāṅgalār Itihāsa*, i, pp. 110–11; Chanda, *Gauḍa-Rājamālā*, p. 13; Paul, *Early History of Bengal*, p. 25).

that the Bodhi tree was brought back to life through the pious efforts of a local ruler named Pūrṇavarman, who claimed to be a lineal descendant of Emperor Aśoka Maurya. We owe this interesting piece of information again to the Chinese pilgrim.[1] The Rohtasgarh fort, which, as we have mentioned above, might have been built originally in the reign of Śaśāṅka as a part of defensive measures undertaken by him when he found that the glory of the Maukharis and their political supremacy were fast dwindling into insignificance. The determination of the Gauḍa king was to restore the fallen fortunes of the Gupta royal house and, as such, he was not prepared to miss any opportunity coming in his way, for the fulfilment of this avowed purpose. It was at this juncture that the Mālava king Devagupta, who also cherished the desire of conquering the Maukhari kingdom but had no opportunity of carrying it out because of the strong Pushpabhūti-Maukhari alliance, got ample opportunity for the same, when Prabhākaravardhana became seriously ill and quite a considerable portion of his army was engaged in repelling the invasion of the Hūṇas on the Western frontiers of his empire. The Mālava king considered all those circumstances to be highly suitable for the

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We cannot see eye to eye with the Chinese pilgrim in respect of his aforesaid statement since Buddhism was never exterminated in Eastern India, although it is possible that Śaśāṅka persecuted the Buddhists, because he was a staunch Śaiva. Hsuan Chaung has himself admitted elsewhere that the *Māheśvaras* or *Pāśupatas* were hostile to the Buddhists. Śaśāṅka undoubtedly destroyed many Buddhist temples and Vihāras, cut down the Bodhi tree and humiliated Buddhism by indulging in many other sacrilegious acts against it, but he could have done so only at the time when he was a *Mahāsāmanta* in charge of Magadha. After murdering Rājyavardhana, he fled to Gauḍa, since he wanted to defend his own kingdom which was in imminent danger of being attacked by Harsha. That was, therefore, not the period when he could think of persecuting the Buddhists in Magadha, under the suspicion that they were helping his potential enemy, Harsha. We, therefore, do not agree with Banerji and other scholars mentioned above that the Buddhists in Magadha were persecuted or that their religion was exterminated, because they were helping the Pushpabhūti Emperor against him.

[1] Watters, ii, p. 115.

pursuance of his ambitious project and, therefore, took the drastic step of marching against Grahavarman with a view to measuring his strength with him. Although that Maukhari king lost his life in his fight with Devagupta, the latter was also not destined to rule over the Maukhari kingdom for long. He undoubtedly got the opportunity of exercising his authority over it, but the actual period for which he had ruled could not possibly have been more than four months, as suggested by circumstantial evidence.

Conflict with the Pushpabhūtis and Frustration of Śaśāṅka's Strategy

There was yet another ruler who, like Devagupta, cherished the desire of conquering the Maukhari kingdom and in fact had already made preparations for the same. He was Śaśāṅka who undoubtedly was closely watching the political vicissitudes through which that kingdom was passing. When Grahavarman lost his life while fighting with Devagupta, the Gauḍa king considered it to be his real opportunity to invade the Maukhari kingdom and rescue it from the Mālava hegemony. What happened after the death of that Maukhari king and the annexation of his territory to Mālava gave Śaśāṅka the real incentive to carry out his aggressive policy, but more tactfully than what was done by the Mālava king. When Rājyavardhana marched against Kānyakubja to punish Devagupta and the latter lost his life on the battlefield, the Gauḍa king was seized with the grim determination of bringing the Maukhari kingdom under his control by some means, fair or foul. He had no doubt about the superiority of the military strength of the Pushpabhūtis, and, accordingly, he wanted to achieve his purpose by killing Rājyavardhana, whom he considered to be the only obstacle in his way of accomplishing a long cherished desire. Posing himself to be a friend of the Maukharis, who had brought his army to prevent Kānyakubja from falling into the hands of the Mālava king, he invited Rājyavardhana to come to his camp for the purpose of meeting him—the well-wisher of the latter's deceased brother-in-law. The invitation of Śaśāṅka was accepted by the Pushpabhūti king and he, too, lost his life, without having the least suspicion about the masterly strategy of the wicked Gauḍa king. The dream of Śaśāṅka was fulfilled without even receiving a blow; and he virtually became the ruler of the Maukhari kingdom without waging war either against the Mālava or the Pushpabhūti king, as history shows.

Some light has been thrown on the nature of the allurement which had dragged Rājyavardhana to go to the camp of Śaśāṅka. Although absolute reliance cannot be placed on the incidental reference contained in the *Harshacharita*, we presume that Śaśāṅka offered the Pushpabhūti king the hand of his daughter with a view to gain his confidence and thereafter achieve his own purpose. The reference in question is the admonition of Skandagupta, a trusted officer of Harsha, who warned him, by giving examples, not to fall in the trap of women, at the time when the latter took the vow of exterminating the Gauḍa royal house and was about to take his army to the East for the same purpose.[1] Since too much stress was laid on the weakness of certain kings in respect of women as recounted by the aforesaid officer, to us it appears that the death of Rājyavardhana was due to an enticement of this nature. Our presumption, to a certain extent, has been supported by Śaṅkara, the commentator on the *Harshacharita*, who has specifically mentioned that Rājyavardhana was offered by Śaśāṅka the hand of his daughter, and in view of this very important information supplied by him, we infer that the former went to the camp of the latter without any kind of suspicion whatsoever in respect of the Gauḍa king's honesty of purpose.[2] The end of the Pushpabhūti king, because of his lack of shrewdness and vigilance, was a sudden one. He went to meet his murderer in his own camp with only a few attendants, sending his vast army back to Sthāneśvara under the command of Bhaṇḍi, and it, therefore, became an easy affair for his enemy to deal with the young inexperienced king in the way he liked. Although the news of the murder of Rājyavardhana was out in no time, no retaliatory action could possibly have been taken by those who had accompanied him to the camp of the Gauḍa king. What appears from the Banskhera Inscription of Harsha is that his elder brother lost his life in keeping his promise or fulfilling his word of honour (*satyānurodhena*); and we have cogent reasons to believe that the person to whom this promise was made was Śaśāṅka himself, whatever might have been its nature.[1]

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[1] *H. C.*, pp. 192–4.

तदियमात्मदेशाचारोचिता स्वभावसरलहृदयजा त्यज्यतां सर्वविश्वासिता । प्रमाददोषाभिषङ्गेषु श्रुतबहुवार्त एव प्रतिदिनं देवः । ········प्रमत्तानां च प्रमदाकृताः प्रमादाः श्रुतिविषयमागता एव देवस्य ।

—Text, pp. 198–200.

[2] अनेनोच्छ्वासार्थः संगृहीतः । तथा हि कृतोऽन्तो विनाशो येन स शशाङ्कनामा गौडाधिपतिः । तत्संहितानां संग्रहमकरोत् । ········तथाशूराणां राज्यवर्धनानुचराणां प्रधानराज्यपुत्राणां तत्संहितानां संग्रहमकरोत् । ········तथा हि तेन शशाङ्केन विश्वासार्थं दूतमुखेन कन्याप्रदानमुक्त्वा प्रलोभितो राज्यवर्धनः स्वगेहे सानुचरो भुञ्जान एव छद्मना व्यापादितः ॥

(Śaṅkara's Commentary on the Introductory verses of Chapter VI)

It is apparent from the aforesaid incidental reference in the *Harshacharita* and also from the comment of Śaṅkara thereon, that the deceased Pushpabhūti king had promised Śaśāṅka to come to his camp to finalise the proposal of the marriage with the latter's daughter. If Rājyavardhana had actually made such a promise after coming out victorious in his fight with Devagupta, the information supplied by the aforesaid texts and inscription relating to his death, may be accepted as correct. In fact, we do not find any discrepancy between the different lines of evidence available; and there is absolutely no difficulty in co-relating them as well for purposes of arriving at a satisfactory conclusion regarding the real cause of the death of the Pushpabhūti king. We cannot but admire the masterly strategy conceived by Śaśāṅka for the fulfilment of his long-cherished desire. He remained quite aloof from the arena of active war avoiding thereby every suspicion about his real intentions; and it is this very fact that deceived Rājyavardhana and ultimately brought about his tragic end. Devagupta was interested in conquering the Maukhari kingdom, and equally too was Śaśāṅka; but the line of action chosen by one to achieve that end was widely divergent from that of the other. The net result of it was that Rājyavardhana considered one to be his mortal enemy and the other his best well-wisher and sympathiser. Whatever might have been the real nature of allurement which had brought that Pushpabhūti king to the camp of Śaśāṅka, there is no doubt that he was murdered in cold blood by that Gauḍa king with the sole intention of taking possession of the kingless Maukhari kingdom.[1] But, as subsequent history shows, Śaśāṅka's dream was unfortunately never fulfilled. And what was still worse, he made one of the most powerful rulers of Northern India his worst enemy by miscalculating his military strength. Perhaps he thought that Harsha, in the face of a series of misfortunes, would be daunted and crippled

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[1] *E. I.*, iv, p. 210.

राजानो युधि दुष्टवाजिन इव श्रीदेवगुप्तादयः कृत्वा येन कशाप्रहारविमुखाः सर्वे समं संयताः । उत्खीयद्विषितो विजित्य वसुधाङ्कृत्वा प्रजानां प्रियं प्राणानुज्झितवानरातिभवने सत्यानुरोधेन यः ।

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1. In this connection we may draw the attention of scholars to a significant passage in the *Harshacharita*, wherein Harsha has been represented as having made certain remarks against Śaśāṅka. His remarks are as follows : "Except the Gauḍa king, the author of evil courses, what man would by such a murder lay such a great king low, in the very moment when he was unarmed" (*H. C.*, p. 197). According to Hsuan Chuang also, Śaśāṅka, the king of Karṇasuvarṇa, "made a plot and murdered him" (*Life*, p. 83; Watters, i, p. 343; Beal, *Records*, i, p. 210). Although the cause of Rājyavardhana's premature death in the camp of Śaśāṅka has been so pointedly referred to in the aforesaid contemporary Sanskrit and Chinese works, some modern scholars, in utter disregard of the same, have drawn their own conclusions regarding the death of that unfortunate king. Chanda is of opinion that he was either defeated and taken prisoner or surrendered to Śaśāṅka (*Gauḍarājamālā*, p. 8 ff); R. D. Banerji thinks that Rājyavardhana "himself was killed in a duel in the camp of the king of Gauḍa" (*History of Orissa*, i, p. 126; *Bāṅgalār Itihāsa*, p. 107 ff). Majumdar and S. K. Banerji have supported the suggestion of Chanda and believe that he was "defeated in a fair fight" and, later on, killed when taken prisoner (*Early History of Bengal*, pp. 17–8; *I. H. Q.*, xxiii, p. 51; *ibid.*, xxvii, p. 317). Maitra also believes that Rājya died in an open conflict with Śaśāṅka. According to him, Rājya had to surrender to Śaśāṅka, who did not consider it prudent to spare his life (*Gauḍarājamālā*, quoted by Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 19, n. 1). We, however, do not find any positive grounds to accept these novel suggestions.

mentally and quite unfit to undertake any military action against him. His astuteness undoubtedly deserves a word of recognition but, as ill-luck would have it, his ambition did not fructify.

Following closely the sequence of political events which forced Harsha to undertake campaigns in different parts of Northern India, we have come to the conclusion that the so-called Mālava-Gauḍa alliance for the extermination of the royal house of the Maukharis is purely a myth. There is not the slightest indication anywhere that Śaśāṅka had come to the borders of the Maukhari kingdom or had penetrated deep into it, for the purpose of strengthening the hands of the Mālava king, Devagupta. In our opinion, Śaśāṅka would have become the undisputed monarch of Northern India and thereby would have been able to restore the fallen forutunes of the Imperial Gupta family to which he probably belonged, had there been no military genius of the calibre of Harsha to offer stubborn resistance in that direction. Thus the astuteness of one was counteracted by the military genius of the other.

What happened to Śaśāṅka after the murder of Rājyavardhana, is as yet a matter of controversy. It is, however, true that when the former came to know that Harshavardhana had taken the vow of not only killing him but also exterminating his family, he took to flight. Since there was no immediate necessity of taking any retaliatory action against that fugitive king, Harsha spent his precious time in searching for his widowed sister, Rājyaśrī, which made him plunge into the wilderness of the Vindhyas. After rescuing his sister from the depths of the Vindhyan forests, the newly crowned Pushpabhūti king took her to Kānyakubja where he had to spend some time in setting right the political affairs of the Maukhari kingdom which undoubtedly was in the grip of anarchy, as would normally be expected under such circumstances. The political vicissitudes of the kingdom of Sthāneśvara, as also of the Maukhari kingdom, must have kept Harsha occupied for a few years, during which period he could not possibly think of undertaking military campaigns in any quarters of Northern

India. There is nothing on record to show that Harsha marched against the kingdom of Gauḍa immediately after installing Rājyaśrī on the Maukhari throne. In fact, absence of any definite information about such an important event in the history of Harsha leads one to the conclusion that the Gauḍa expedition was undertaken, if at all, by him after a considerable period of time during which he remained busy in settling the affairs of the Maukhari kingdom, which must have required his immediate attention. Harsha did undertake campaigns in the East, in the course of which he conquered the whole of Magadha and extended his sovereign sway as far as the Ganges and appointed his loyal friend Mādhavagupta as the viceroy of the newly conquered territory in the East; but there is no evidence on record to show that he had actually crossed that river and conquered the Gauḍa kingdom at that time. What actually had happened we do not know, but it is a fact that the eastern campaigns proved to be of considerable territorial gains to Harsha and conversely, considerable loss in that respect to Śaśāṅka. With the conquest of Magadha by the Pushpabhūti Emperor, the political authority of Śaśāṅka very probably remained confined to the kingdom of Gauḍa and its dependencies in Bengal and Orissa; and it is this very fact that has been adumbrated by a passage in the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* which specifically mentions that the authority of king Soma (Śaśāṅka) remained confined to his own kingdom. If this be true, and we believe it to be so, then Śaśāṅka ruled undisturbed over his ancestral kingdom, relinquishing his claim over Magadha of which he was the *Mahāsāmanta*, at the time of Avantivarman. It is probable that, because he had given up his claim to rule over that part of the Maukhari kingdom, there was no urgency on the part of Harsha to reconquer it from the Gauḍa king; but as regards the former's further advance in the East, if undertaken at all, we believe it to have been a complete frustration in view of the elaborate military preparations made by the latter on the eastern bank of the Ganges for the defence of his territory, as was done by a Paurava king on the bank of the Vitastā to repel the attack of a Greek invader.

Taking every aspect of the question into consideration, we have come to the conclusion that the two hostile kings dared not to encounter each other, but each remained vigilant about the military activities of the other specially in the border areas. This state of affairs seems to have lasted till the death of the Gauḍa king who undoubtedly predeceased his more powerful enemy.

The Conquests of Śaśāṅka and the Extent of His Territories

The parts of North-eastern and Eastern India over which Śaśāṅka had ruled, as an independent king from c. 602 A.D., can be ascertained from the available literary and epigraphic evidence. He exercised sovereign sway over Karṇasuvarṇa, Tāmralipti and Kaliṅga, that is to say, over Bengal and Orissa. Some parts of these he might have conquered in pursuance of his aggressive policy, of which he was a victim, like most of his contemporaries. His ancestral kingdom of Gauḍa certainly did not comprise the Midnapore District of Bengal. Nor had he any claims over the kingdom of Kaliṅga by his birthright. Both Tāmralipti and Kaliṅga seem to have been conquered by him in the course of a single campaign which he might have undertaken after gaining independence on the death of Avantivarman in the year A.D. 602 or, after his return from Kānyakubja in A.D. 606, the former being more probable than the latter. From the Patiakella Inscription it appears that during the year A.D. 602-3, corresponding to G.E. 283, Orissa was being ruled over by a certain king of the Mudgala family named Sagguyayyana, who bore the imperialistic titles *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Paramadevatā dhidaivata.*[1] That he was the paramount sovereign of Kaliṅga has been fully borne out by the aforesaid inscription which appears to have been issued by one of his feudatory Mahārāja Śivarāja. Since Sagguyayyana was a very powerful king, we believe that he ruled over Tāmralipti (Midnapore District—Bengal) which formed a part of his kingdom in or about the year A.D. 603. Śaśāṅka undertook a campaign in the Southern and South-western parts of his kingdom, in the course of which he conquered not only Tāmralipti but also Kaliṅga, pushing his victorious arms probably as far as the river Godavari. That he had succeeded in bringing about the downfall of the powerful Mudgala family of Kaliṅga and establishing his authority over the whole of that kingdom and its adjoining regions, is more than evident from the aforesaid Midnapore and Ganjam inscriptions. Since the dates furnished by the two Midnapore Copper-plate Inscriptions are very much mutilated, they cannot possibly be utilised for historical purposes; but the one supplied by the Ganjam Copper-plate Inscription clearly shows that the conqueror succeeded in maintaining his authority over the newly conquered territories as late as A.D. 619 and even after. Whether Śaśāṅka conquered Kaliṅga after A.D. 606, when he succeeded in killing Rājyavardhana, must remain a matter of controversy for the present, in the absence of specific information about his conquests; but it is a fact that Harsha could not undermine the political supremacy of the Gauḍa king till A.D. 619, the year in which his paramountcy in Orissa and the Andhra country has been epigraphically borne out.

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[1] *E. I.*, ix, pp. 285-88.

In connection with the aforesaid conquests of Śaśāṅka, we should also take into consideration certain facts about him, which have come to be mentioned in the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* in which he has been given the name of Soma, obviously because the author of that work had forgotten the name of that king by which he was more popularly known.[1] In it, there is a significant passage which seems to suggest that Harsha virtually kept Śaśāṅka confined to the Gauḍa kingdom, but it does not suggest anything as regards the date of the same.[2] To what extent the information in question is historically correct, we do not know, but it is certain that if it had happened after the year A.D. 606, the Gauḍa king would not have been able to exercise his political supremacy as far as the southern limits of the Kaliṅga country up to the year A.D. 619, since his confinement to his own kingdom by a superior power would afford a real opportunity to the former's vassal chiefs to throw off his yoke and declare independence.[1] This at least did not happen till A.D. 619, if we are to believe the information preserved in the, Ganjam Copper-plate Inscription, although we admit that it is possible after that date.

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[1] Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, p. 49.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

In this context, we should also take into consideration the evidence of the Doobi Copper-plate Inscription which, in all probability, has some light to shed on the campaigns of the Gauḍa king in the east beyond the River Brahmaputra. The aforesaid copper plate inscription clearly refers to the success of a Gauḍa king in his efforts to conquer the kingdom of Kāmarūpa but, unfortunately, does not mention his name.[2] The ruler of Kāmarūpa who strongly resisted the Gauḍa king was Supratishṭhitavarman, son of Susthitavarman. In this connection, we would like to mention here (for purposes of determining the contemporaneity of this king) that his father was a strong opponent of king Mahāsenagupta of Mālava, according to the Aphsad Stone Inscription and that his younger brother, Bhāskaravarman, was a staunch ally of Emperor Harsha.[3] The identity of the king of Gauḍa mentioned in the aforesaid inscription can only be determined on the basis of the contemporaneity referred to above. Before we proceed any further, we would like to record here the information available from the Doobi plates for the solution of the problem confronting us. It is stated in that inscription that the invasion of the Gauḍa king in question was strongly resisted by the two sons of Susthitavarman, but "in spite of their brave resistance, alas, the two brothers were completely covered with the striking arms of the enemies and that,...they were encircled by the fierce elephants of the Gauḍa army and were captured by the enemies."[1] It is reasonable to believe that one of the opponents was the ruling king of Kāmarūpa for whose assistance and in the interest of the cause of the country his younger brother had joined him. Since from the time of the accession of Harsha in A. D. 606 up to the time of his campaigns in the east and the arrival of Hsuan Chuang in the capital of the Kāmarūpa kingdom the ruling king of Gauḍa was Śaśāṅka, we cannot be far from truth if we identify him with the opponent of the two sons of Susthitavarman. The solution of the problem would become easier if we take into consideration the fact that it was at the court of King Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa that the Chinese pilgrim had come, probably at his request.[2] That Śaśāṅka succeeded in establishing his authority over Kāmarūpa by placing Supratishṭhitavarman on the throne as his protégé, is also evident from the Doobi plates, as we shall see below.[3]

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[1] Banerji has suggested that "there is no doubt about the fact that eventually he (Śaśāṅka) was driven out of Karṇasuvarṇa. It is quite possible that this event had taken place before the date of the Ganjam Plate and at that time he had lost his possessions in Bengal and was the master of Orissa only" (*History of Orissa,* i, p. 129). We fail to see any force behind the argument because it is very doubtful that a feudatory king would continue to acknowledge the suzerainty of his overlord, if the latter had lost his power and particularly his home kingdom.

[2] *J. A. R. S.,* xi, p. 33ff and contd. in xii, p. 16ff; *I. H. Q.,* xxvi, p. 243 ff.

[3] *C. I. I.,* iii, p. 200 ff.

Thus, taking the entire history of Śaśāṅka's military career into consideration, we come to the conclusion that he not only conquered the district of Midnapore and the southern parts of Bengal and Orissa, but also extended his sway beyond the Brahmaputra into Kāmarūpa which he added to his ancestral kingdom of Gauḍa. Prior to the campaigns of Harsha in the east, he was also the undisputed monarch of the

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1. *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff; *I. H. Q.*, xxvi, p. 243 ff;
2. *Life*, p. 169.
   It is a fact that Bhāskaravarman was one of the patrons of the University of Nalanda as is evident from the discovery of his seal at Nalanda (Sastri, H. N., *M. A. S. I.*, No. 66, pp. 69-70). Moreover, we know that he was intimately connected with Śīlabhadra, known to have been one of the distinguished teachers of that University. It is probable that Bhāskaravarman came to know about the presence of the Chinese scholar in the University of Nalanda from one of these persons.
3. See the Chapter : Varmans of Kāmarūpa.

western parts of Bengal as well as the southern portions of Bihar, if the archaeological evidence furnished by the Rohtasgarh Seal Matrix is to be believed. All the provinces thus included in the Gauḍa kingdom, however, were annexed by Harsha in the course of his campaigns in Northern India whereby he succeeded in claiming imperial dignity for himself.

The end of Śaśāṅka

That Harsha could not fulfil his vow of killing Śaśāṅka and exterminating the Gauḍa Royal family for more than a decade after his accession-is a fact; but it is equally true that a considerable portion of his enemy's territory in Bengal, Orissa and Andhra had been conquered by him in the course of his eastern and southern campaigns during the later period of his reign. When the Pushpabhūti Emperor came to the east, conquered Bihar and the western parts of Bengal, and appointed his friend Mādhavagupta as his viceroy of the newly acquired territories, Śaśāṅka's authority undoubtedly became crippled. If the author of the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* had in mind the conquests of Harsha in the east, there is some justification of his making such a statement that Śaśāṅka was virtually kept confined to the Gauḍa kingdom. But we have grave doubts whether the Gauḍa king was alive when Harsha made campaigns in Kaliṅga and other kingdoms in the South in view of the fact that when Hsuan Chuang came to Karṇasuvarṇa, Śaśāṅka was already dead. It may be specifically mentioned here that available information points to the fact that, chronologically, Harsha's earlier campaigns in Bihar and Bengal, as far as the Ganges, took place long before the pilgrim's visit to Karṇasuvarṇa. The possibility of the annexation of that province by Harsha to his empire could, therefore, be only when the Emperor made fresh military excursions in Eastern India and conducted his army far in the South in the course of which, as mentioned above, Koṅgoda was conquered by him. Thus, taking all the lines of evidence, direct or indirect, into consideration, it appears that Harsha could not wreak his vengeance on the Gauḍa King for having killed his elder brother, as promised. We are, therefore, not sure of the fact whether the two rulers ever confronted each other on the battlefield.

If Rājyavardhana's death took place in 606 A. D., in the year in which Harsha ascended the throne and if we are to believe in the facts stated in the aforesaid Ganjam Plate, no reasonable doubt can be entertained that Śaśāṅka did rule for at least thirteen years, or even more, without any disturbance created in his kingdom by Harsha. It was probably during this period that he issued gold coins which clearly indicate a prosperous reign. Unless proved to the contrary, it must be admitted that Śaśāṅka succeeded in maintaining the frontiers of his ancestral kingdom and those of his newly acquired territories till his death. As there is no cogent reason to suppose that he died on the battlefield while fighting against one of his political rivals, the presumption that arises is that his demise was due to some natural cause.[1] The information supplied by the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* about Śaśāṅka and his kingdom cannot be entertained in sober history, except that he was still ruling over Karṇasuvarṇa when Harsha was on the throne. Whatever else has been recorded in that Buddhist work about him will not be able to stand historical criticism, like many other traditions recorded in it.

We have stated above that Śaśānka's fame and glory, both as a ruler and as a conqueror, were eclipsed by Harsha's exploits and achievements. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the works which supply information relating to the history of that Pushpabhūti monarch are characterised by a marked tendency to eulogise him. Since there was no Bāṇa or Bilhaṇa, Abhinanda or Padmagupta, to write the history of his reign, we are at a loss to estimate correctly the political achivements of Śaśāṅka, whose actions were chiefly directed towards the fulfilment of one single purpose which was undoubtedly the restoration of the glory of the family to which he belonged. We have stated above that, like Yaśodharman, Śaśāṅka, too, remains alone and unrelated in the political history of Ancient India. We do not know who his son and successor was, as there is no information on this point available in any historical document hitherto known. On his death, his territory which, in respect of size, was by no means insignificant, was undoubtedly annexed to the Pushpabhūti empire. And when that vast empire suffered dismemberment on the death of its architect, Harsha, and a number of small states came into existence, the kingdom of Gauḍa also suffered the same fate. The names of the rulers of Karṇasuvarṇa, who came to rule after the death of Harsha can be recovered from certain inscriptions of Bengal, but all of them, without any exception, were nondescripts. In fact, with the death of Śaśāṅka, the glory of the Gauḍa royal family passed into oblivion.

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[1] The statement of Smith well sums up the position when he says that Śaśāṅka 'escaped with little loss' and 'his kingdom probably became subject to Harsha at a later date' (*E. H. I.*, p. 352).

CHAPTER VII

THE VARMANS OF KĀMARŪPA

Origin and early history

During the first half of the seventh century A.D., Kāmarūpa was being ruled over by the Varman dynasty which had risen to power since about the middle of the fourth century A.D. The early history of that family is wrapped up in legends and, if they are to be believed, their origin may be traced from the demon Naraka, son of Vishṇu and the Earth, who established himself on the throne of Kāmarūpa after defeating and slaying Ghaṭaka, the earliest known ruler of that country.[1] According to tradition, Naraka was succeeded by his son Bhagadattta and grandson Vajradatta.[2] After the last named king the other rulers of the family reigned for three thousand years till Pushyavarman ascended the throne.[3] With Pushyavarman begins what may be called the historical period of the political history of Kāmarūpa.

Kāmarūpa attained little importance or political significance during the legendary period of its history but, with the accession of Pushyavarman, it gained in power, influence and prestige in Eastern India. Pushyavarman assumed the imperialistic title of *Mahārājādhirāja* and ruled from Prāgjyotisha, the ancient capital of that kingdom during the middle of the 4th century A.D.[4] Although it is difficult to explain, due to paucity of evidence, his rise to power, the credit of bringing Kāmarūpa out of obscurity will always go to him. The literary and epigraphic records preserve the following names of the successors of Pushyavarman:[1]

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[1] *Kālikā P.*, Ch. 36-42; *Bhāgavata P.*, x, Ch. 59; *Yoginī Tantra*, p. 81.

[2] Cf. Tezpur Grant, *J. A. S. B.*, ix, p. 766 ff (v : 3-6);
Nowgong Grant, *J. A. S. B.*, lxvi, p. 285 ff (v : 3-8);
Bargāon Grant, *J. A. S. B.*, lxvii, p. 99 ff (v : 3-8).

[3] Nidhanpur Copper-plate Grant, *E. I.*, xii p. 73 (v. 6);
Doobi Grant, *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff (v. 5-6); *I. H. Q.*, xxvi, p. 243.

[4] Kāmarūpa was popularly known as Prāgjyotisha during the early period of its history. The name of the capital also thus stood for the country. Kāmarūpa, as a name of the country, appears for the first time in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta (*C. I. I.*, iii, p. 8).
Nalanda Clay Seals of Bhāskaravarman; Sastri, H. N., *M. A. S. I.*, No. 66, pp. 69-70.

Pushyavarman
|
Samudravarman
(m. Dattadevī)
|
Balavarman
(m. Ratnāvatī)
|
Kalyāṇavarman
(m. Gandharvavatī)
|
Gaṇapativarman
(m. Yajñavatī)
|
Mahendravarman
(m. Suvratā)
|
Nārāyaṇavarman
(m. Devavatī)
|
Bhūtivarman
(or Mahābhūtavarman)
(m. Vijñānavatī)
|
Chandramukhavarman
(m. Bhogavatī)
|
Sthitavarman
(or Sthitivarman)
(m. Nayanāvatī)
|
Susthitavarman
(or Susthiravarman)
(m. Śyāmādevī)
|
Supratishṭhitavarman — Bhāskaravarman

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[1] Nidhanpur Copper-plate Grant, *E. I.*, xii, p. 73; *ibid.*, xix, p. 115 ff

According to the Allahabad Pillar Inscription, Kāmarūpa was one of the frontier kingdoms of the empire of Samudragupta, the frontier ruler of which maintained friendly relations with that Gupta monarch.[1] Since Harisheṇa, the compiler of the Allahabad *Praśasti*, has not mentioned the names of the rulers of the frontier kingdoms of Samudragupta's empire, the name of the ruler of Kāmarūpa has, so far, remained unknown to us. But the kings of that easternmost Hindu State were politically not insignificant; their epigraphic records bear sufficient testimony to the fact that some of them had actually performed *Aśvamedha* sacrifices during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., when the power of the Imperial Guptas was at its glorious best and they were ruling over a vast area lying on the western side of the Brahmaputra. During the penultimate decade of the 6th cent. A.D., Susthitavarman (*alias* Mṛigāṅka) was undoubtedly the ruler of Kāmarūpa. The literary and epigraphic records describe him as a powerful king who had "seized the majesty of monarch" and whose "feet were illumined with the jewels of the heads of kings, brought under control by his power."[2] But about c. 590 A.D. he was defeated by Mahāsenagupta during the latter's invasion of Kāmarūpa, as we learn from the Aphsad Stone Inscription.[3] Susthitavarman very probably lost his life in that contest for political supremacy between him and the aforesaid Gupta king in or about the year 592 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Supratishṭhitavarman.[4] During the reign of

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and 245 ff; Nalanda Clay Seals of Bhāskaravarman, *M. A. S. I.*, No.66, pp. 69-70; *J. B. O. R. S.*, v, pp. 302-3; *ibid.*, vi, pp. 151-2. The *Harshacharita* also gives partial genealogy with slight variations in the spellings of some of the names (*H. C.*, p. 217).

[1] *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 8.

[2] *H. C.*, pp. 217-8; Doobi Grant, *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff (v. 41).

[3] Aphsad Stone Inscription, *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 200 ff; Doobi Grant, *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff (v. 48); Nidhanpur Copper-plate Grant, *E. I.*, xii, p. 73 (v. 19).

[4] *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff (v. 48); *I. H. Q.*, xxvi, p. 243. Strangely, Basak is of opinion that he never ruled as a king of Kāmarūpa (*H. N. E. I.*, p. 217). The suggestion of K. L. Barua that he died as a crown-prince (*yuvarāja*) is also untenable in view of

Supratishṭhitavarman the Kāmarūpa kingdom was invaded by the king of Gauḍa, who, on the computed basis of contemporaneity, may be considered to have been Śaśāṅka. From the Doobi Copper-plate Inscription we learn that both Supratishṭhita and his younger brother Bhāskara challenged the military prowess of the Gauḍa king and offered a stubborn resistance, but, unfortunately, they were defeated because of the numerical superiority of the Gauḍa army. From the same source it further appears that when the two princes, being exhausted, fell unconscious on the battle-field, they were encircled by the elephant forces of the invader and were made war-prisoners.[1] But the magnanimity that was exhibited by the Gauḍa king on the occasion was unique. He not only treated the two brothers generously but placed Supratishṭhita on the throne of Kāmarūpa, probably in recognition of his military genius, sense of royal duty and patriotism.[2] This interesting event of outstanding importance in the history of Kāmarūpa perhaps finds a unique parallel in what was done by Alexander the Great in respect of Porus. The Macedonian Conqueror purchased the alliance of that king through his acts of magnanimity and generosity, and we believe the same was done by the Gauḍa king in respect of that young king of Kāmarūpa. We have reasons to believe that, like Porus, Supratishṭhita also became a vassal chief of the Gauḍa king, which is only natural. Whether this act of magnanimity was prompted by a political motive or not, we do not know, but it is quite possible that the Gauḍa king, whoever he might have been, wanted to make the eastern frontiers of his territories secure by making the vanquished Prāgjyotisha king his protègè. If the invader really had been Śaśāṅka we can only submit that it was undoubtedly a masterly strategy resorted to by him because it left him free to carry out his aggressive policy in other directions in Northern

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clear references to the contrary in both literary and epigraphic records (*H. C.*, p. 212 ff; *E. I.*, xii, p. 65 ff; *I. H. Q.*, xxvi, p. 243 ff; *M. A. S. I.*, No. 66, p. 69 ff).

[1] *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff; *I. H. Q.*, xxvi, p. 243 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*

India. But the reign of Supratishṭhitavarman does not seem to have been a prolonged one, and with his death the friendly relations that were established between the kingdom of Gauḍa and Kāmarūpa ended, as the subsequent history of these two kingdoms will show.

Bhāskaravarman

After the death of Supratishṭhitavarman, the exact circumstances which are unknown to us and which, it is reasonable to infer, must have taken place within a decade of this momentous alliance, his younger brother Bhāskaravarman ascended the throne of Kāmarūpa. Taking all the circumstantial evidence into consideration, we believe that his accession took place towards the beginning of the 7th century A.D., but certainly not later than the death of Prabhākaravardhana.[1] Bhāskaravarman was the most powerful and illustrious ruler of his dynasty and with his accession Kāmarūpa added a few more laurels to its glorious history. A description of the early years of his life as given in the Doobi Copper-plate Grant shows that, even as a prince, he exercised considerable influence over the administration of the kingdom during the reign of his elder brother.[2] It has already been noticed earlier that, as a prince, Bhāskaravarman took prominent part in the war against the Gauḍas by the side of his elder brother, Supratishṭhitavarman. When pieced together, all these bits of information speak highly of his experience in statecraft and science of warfare. No wonder that his epigraphs speak eloquently of his "learning, valour, patience, honour and good qualities."[1] Evidently, Bhāskaravarman was either sharing or taking a very active interest in the responsibilities of administration during the reign of his brother, and Hsuan Chuang seems to have referred to him as *Kumārarāja*. We have no doubt that if, instead of his brother, his father had been ruling, the pilgrim would have referred to him as *Yuvarāja*. *Kumārarāja*, thus, was the popular epithet of Bhāskaravarman when his brother, Śupratishṭhitavarman, was on the throne.[2]

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[1] P. N. Bhattacharya is of opinion that Bhāskaravarman might have been chosen king by the people during the lifetime of his elder brother, who had, therefore, to abdicate in his favour (*Kāmarūpa Śāsanāvalī*, p. 31, n. 3). But a careful reading of the fifth verse of the Doobi Copper-plate Inscription of Bhāskaravarman shows that he ascended the throne after his elder brother's death (Cf. Sircar, D. C., *I. H. Q.*, xxvi, p. 245; Chaudhury, P. D., *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff). Besides, if Bhāskaravarman had ascended the throne by removing his elder brother from the same, the author of the Nidhanpur Copper-plate Inscription would never have devoted two verses in praise of the latter.

[2] *J. A. R. S.*, xi, p. 33 ff.

The success of Bhāskaravarman rested not only on his qualities of head and heart but is also reflected in his maintenance of fruitful relations with his powerful contemporaries of the day. Northern India witnessed the rise of several powers towards the close of the sixth cent. A. D. Of these, the Gauḍas and the Guptas were the traditional old enemies of Kāmarūpa; likewise were the Maukharis and the Pushpabhūtis who had recently been drawn closer together through matrimony. Bhāskaravarman lost no time in taking his decision. We learn from the *Harshacharita* that he dispatched an envoy named Haṁsavega to the court of Harsha charged with the message : "From childhood upwards it was this prince's firm resolution never to do homage to any being except the lotus feet of Śiva. Such an ambition, so difficult of attainment in three worlds, may be reached by one of three means, by the conquest of the whole earth, by death, or by a friend like your majesty,

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1. *E. I.*, xii, p. 165 ff (lines 34-5).
2. *Life*, p. 165; Watters, i, p. 348; Beal, ii, p. 196. The name '*Kumāra*', as mentioned by Hsuan Chuang, has been interpreted differently by scholars. Kielhorn contended that his actual name was *Kumāra*, and Bhāskara was his surname only (*J. R. A. S.*, 1898, p. 384 ff). K. L. Barua and P. Bhattacharya explain the use of this name as a connotation suggesting that Bhāskara remained probably a bachelor (*Early History of Kāmarūpa*, p. 57 ff; *Kāmarūpa Śāsanāvalī*, pp. 16-17).

   It may also be noted in this connection that it would be wrong to identify Kumāra, the king of Kāmarūpa, mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim with *Kumāra* of the *Harshacharita* (*H. C.*, p. 76). *Kumāra*, mentioned by Bāṇa, cannot be identified with king Bhāskaravarman, as the latter was already a crowned king when he sent an envoy to Harsha (Cf. D. C. Sircar, *I. H. Q.*, xix, p. 278 ff).

peerless hero of the world, burning the heavens with a blaze of impetuous valour. The friendship of monarchs again commonly has regard to utility...........Seeing, therefore, that ours is an object attainable only by impossible expedients, let your majesty, graciously regarding a mere petition, hear. The sovereign of Assam desires with your majesty an imperishable alliance......... ...... If your majesty's heart too is inclined to friendship and can comprehend that friends enter upon a slavery disguised under synonym, then enough ! Commission me to say that the sovereign of Assam may enjoy your majesty's as Mandāra Viṣṇu's hearty embrace, so that the crushed bits of bracelet gems may grind as they clash against the jewelled edges of great arm rings.............. If your majesty accepts not his love, command me what to report to my master."[1] Haṁsavega met Harsha when the latter was on his way to Kānyakubja to punish the Gauḍa king Śaśāṅka for murdering Rājyavardhana. The Pushpabhūti Emperor immediately accepted the hand of friendship extended by the king of Kāmarūpa as he must have foreseen the importance of it in fulfilling the task which he had undertaken.[2] The motive of Bhāskaravarman in seeking an alliance with the distant king of Sthāneśvara, only a few years after ascending the throne, as already mentioned above, must have been to regain independence by throwing off the subservient yoke of his Gauḍa contemporary.[3] The diplomatic relation between the two in fact arose out of certain important political considerations, but soon developed, as we learn from the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa and the accounts of the Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Chuang, into genuine friendship through personal contact. As stated elsewhere, the relationship thus established between the two was of the nature of a subordinate alliance in so far as Bhāskaravarman was concerned, because he had to acknowledge the paramountcy of the

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1. *H. C.*, pp. 217–8.
2. We have already mentioned above that the diplomatic mission of Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa, was actually intended to establish friendly relations with Rājyavardhana.
3. Cf. Banerji, R. D., *History of Orissa*, i. p. 128 ff; Tripathi, *History of Kanauj*, p. 72; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 139.

Pushpabhūti monarch. Although the ruler of Kāmarūpa was independent for all intents and purposes, his territory virtually came to be included in Harsha's sphere of influence like Valabhī, as suggested by some scholars.[1]

It is very unfortunate that the details of Harsha's military campaigns in the Ganges-Brahmaputra valley are warped into obscurity, or else the part played by Bhāskaravarman in the same would have been known to us. Some light has, however, been thrown on such conquests which that ruler of Kāmarūpa made independently by his famous Nidhanpur Copper-plate Inscription issued from his victorious military camp at Karṇasuvarṇa.[2]

There is a definite indication in the aforesaid Inscription that Bhāskaravarman had ruled over those regions at least for some time during his reign. We presume that these areas it came into his possession after the death of Harsha. From the same source we learn that, in the Chandrāpurī Vishaya of Puṇḍravardhana which lay in the aforesaid region, his great-grandfather Bhūtivarman had previously donated lands to two hundred Brāhmaṇas.[3] It is obvious, therefore, that Puṇḍravardhanabhukti was conquered by him some time after the death of Yaśodharman who had undoubtedly conquered that area and stretched his victorious arms as far as the Lauhitya (Brahmaputra).[4] Further, Puṇḍravardhana *bhukti* could not be retained by the two immediate successors of Bhūtivarman evidently because of the rise and expansion of the Gauḍa kingdom which comprised the whole area lying between the

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1. Vaidya, *H. M. H. I.*, i, pp. 30–1; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 44; Paul, P. L., *I. H. Q.*, xii, p. 63 ff.
2. *E. I.*, xix, pp. 115–25.
3. *Ibid.*

   The period of Bhūtivarman's reign is placed some time in the beginning of the 6th cent. A.D. up to about 555 A. D. (Cf. Baḍagaṅgā Inscription of Bhūtivarman dated G. E. 234=553–4 A. D.)
4. Cf. Damodarpur Copper-plate Inscription of the time of—Gupta dated in the year 224 G. E. (*E. I.*, xv, p. 142 ff; *Ibid.*, xvii, p. 193 ff). It is from them that Yaśodharman conquered it (cf. Mandaṣor Pillar Inscription, *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 15ff).

Ganges and the Brahmaputra. That it passed into the hands of the Gauḍa kings is evident from the Harsha Inscription of Īśānavarman and the Aphsad Stone Inscription of Ādityasena, both of which specifically mention that the Gauḍas were in power in that area.[1] It is true that both Īśānavarman and Mahāsenagupta succeeded one after the other in defeating their contemporary rulers of Gauḍa and annexing their kingdom, but permanent annexation of the same had not been possible in either case. Śaśāṅka was perhaps the most powerful ruler of the Gauḍa kingdom and there is no doubt that he became a terror to the rulers of Kāmarūpa both because of his overwhelming the Kāmarūpa ruler, Supratishṭhitavarman, and his brother Bhāskara, by sheer weight of numerical superiority of his forces in a sanguine battle and also because of his aggressive designs. The post-haste dispatch of Haṁsavega by Bhāskaravarman to Harsha, the newly crowned king of Sthāneśvara, interpreted in the light of the Doobi Grant, is a clear pointer to this. But, as shown earlier, after the death of that powerful Gauḍa king, his territories were annexed by Harsha; and it is possible that after his death it was conquered by Bhāskaravarman, there being no stronger power to resist him.[2] During the period intervening the death of Bhūtivarman and the conquest of the Gauḍa kingdom by Bhāskaravarman, the donations made to the Brāhmaṇas by the former in the Chandrāpurī *Vishaya* of the Puṇḍravardhana *bhukti* had become invalid because of the rapid political changes which had taken place there. It is possible that the descendants of these Brāhmaṇas had prayed to Bhāskaravarman for recognition of their claims to the land-grants which had previously been donated by his illustrious great-grandfather, Bhūtivarman. The Nidhanpur Copper-plate Inscription bears ample testimony to the fact that their prayer was acceded to by Bhāskaravarman who legalised their rights to inheritance of the same by issuing a charter. We are, however, not aware of the fact whether the rulers of Gauḍa who had preceded Bhāskaravarman as overlords of the same territory had also recognised the titles of those Brāhmaṇa families in respect of the very same plots of land originally assigned to them by Bhūtivarman in pursuance of the famous utterance of Vyāsa: "*yasya yasya yadā bhūmi tasya tasya tadā phalam*".[1]

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[1] *E. I.*, xiv, p. 115 ff; *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 203.

[2] Cf. Sircar, D. C., *I. H. Q.*, xix, p. 278; Bhattacharya, P. N., *E. I.*, xii, p. 66 ff; *I. A.*, xliii, pp. 95–6; Majumdar, R. C., *History of Bengal*, i, p. 78, n. 3; Sen, B. C., *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, pp. 260–8.

Some scholars have, however, offered other suggestions regarding the circumstances and the probable occasion and date of the occupation of Karṇasuvarṇa by Bhāskaravarman. P. N. Bhattacharya is of opinion that it was conquered by Harsha and Bhāskara together and the latter was in Karṇasuvarṇa celebrating the victory with the former when the grant was issued (*Kāmarūpa Śāsanāvalī*, pp. 5, 6, 9, 16). R. G. Basak has suggested that Harsha undertook two campaigns against Śaśāṅka. In the second one he was accompanied by Bhāskara and after taking possession of Śaśāṅka's kingdom "he made it over to his ally Bhāskaravarman" (*H. N. E. I.*, pp. 226–7). But at another place he makes a contradictory suggestion that "Karṇasuvarṇa might not at any time have formed any part of the Kāmarūpa kingdom at all, but Bhāskara might only have pitched his *jaya-skandhāvāra* (victorious moving camp)

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there, as an ally of Harsha, during the latter's second campaign" (*Ibid.*, pp. 228–9). C. V. Vaidya also made an identical suggestion opining that Karṇasuvarṇa was "given to the Kumārarāja of Assam" by Harsha as the former was a subordinate of the latter (*H. M. H. I.*, p. 30). The contention of N. N. Vasu that Harsha probably allowed Bhāskaravarman to rule over Gauḍa is not different from that of Vaidya (*Social History of Kāmarūpa*, i, p. 148 ff). D.C. Ganguly (*I.H.Q.*, xv, p. 122 ff), N. N. Dasgupta (*I. C.*, ii, p. 37 ff), and B. N. Sircar (*I. H. Q.*, vi, pp. 442–3) take an extreme view that Harsha never held sway over Bengal and the kingdom of Śaśāṅka passed on to Bhāskara after the former's death. Ganguly even curiously suggests that the occupation is proved by the fact that Bhāskara, along with Hsuan Chuang passed through Gauḍa with a vast army to meet Harsha at Kajaṅgala, and his 30,000 ships passed along the Ganges to the same place (*I. H. Q.*, xv, p. 122 ff; cf. also *Life*, p. 172).

[1] A similar example of a grant in abeyance being renewed is furnished by the Barah Inscription of Mihira Bhoja dated V. S. 893. It appears that resanctioning the grant of a previous ruling family by the succeeding one was quite in practice. But in this instance the same grant seems to have been resanctioned on two separate occasions, once by Nāgabhaṭa II and, again by his grandson, Mihira Bhoja (*E. I.*, xix, pp. 15–19.)

When Wang-hiuen-tse crossed into India with a force of Nepalese and Tibetan soldiers to punish Arjuna for having attacked him and killed his escorts in the foot-hills of the Himalayas, as mentioned by us earlier, Bhāskaravarman (Chi-Kieu-mo=Śrī-Kumāra ?) "sent him as present 30,000 oxen and horses, provision for all his army and also bows, scimitars and collars of great value."[1] He also presented him a "map of the country."[2] It may, therefore, be concluded that anarchy following in the wake of the death of Harsha proved an opportunity for Bhāskaravarman to occupy the eastern regions of the Pushpabhūti empire which were not under Magadha and thus extend his sovereign sway over the former territories of Śaśāṅka. This, very probably, is mainly the reason why in the Chinese annals he is also referred to as "the king of Eastern India."[3] We, however, do not accept the suggestion of Bhattacharya that Bhāskaravarman received Kāmarūpa as a reward from the Chinese mission for the timely help he had rendered to it.[4] We know that Wang-hiuen-tse did not make any permanent and large-scale conquests in this country so as to have been able to make a gift of the territories in question to the king of Kāmarūpa. Bhāskaravarman might have been prompted to render assistance to the Chinese ambassador because the throne of his friend and ally, Harsha, had been usurped by Arjuna, or that he was prompted to do so in memory of his associations with the Chinese pilgrim, whom he held in high veneration.

In this connection, we should also take into consideration another interesting piece of information which indirectly alludes to Bhaskaravarman's suzerainty over South and South-eastern parts of Bengal. According to Beal, Bhāskaravarman and probably his predecessors as well "had the sea-route to China under their special protection."[5] This may imply that the sway of Bhāskaravarman extended up to Samataṭa and the Gangetic delta in the South.[1] The Nidhanpur Grant of Bhāskaravarman refers to a number of his feudatories who "made the circle of (related) powers attached to him and equalled the powers of the ring. of his feudatories by the strength of his own arms."[2] We presume that the feudatory chiefs, referred to in that inscription, might have been the rulers of Southern Bengal. In this connection we may also note that there is a controversy regarding the location of the donated land mentioned in the Nidhanpur Grant. The problem arose due to the fact that the grant was found not in Bengal, but in Pañchakhaṇḍa in Sylhet. Disputing the location of the land, Bhattasali, Ghosh, Chaudhury and some other scholars support the theory that the land in question lay not in Bengal but in Sylhet.[3] If their contentions be correct, it lends support to another fact—that the Southern districts of Bengal, viz., Comilla, Dacca, Noakhali, Sylhet and Tripura—were included in the kingdom of Kāmarūpa during the reign of Bhāskaravarman.

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[1] *I. A.*, ix, p. 20.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *E. I.*, xii, p. 66 ff; *I. A.*, xliii, pp. 95–96.

[5] *Life*, p. xxvi.

Some scholars are of opinion that the sovereign sway of Bhāskaravarman also extended over Bihar.[4] Their suggestion is based on the fact that a clay seal of that king has been discovered in the ruins at Nalanda.[1] It is, however, now an established fact that after Harsha, the Later Guptas has established their independent rule over Magadha. Bhāskarvarman, therefore, could not have any opportunity to annex that part of Magadha to his kingdom where Nalanda is situated. The discovery of his seal at Nalanda is also not surprising because of the intimacy which he had developed with Śīlabhadra, the then doyen of the Nalanda College.

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[1] In our opinion South Bengal came under the suzerainty of the kings of Kāmarūpa during the reign of Bhūtivarman. The Baḍagaṅgā Inscription of his time refers to his performance of a horse-sacrifice while the Nidhanpur Grant states that he had a circle of feudatories around him (*E. I.*, xii, p. 65 ff; *ibid.*, 1947, pp. 18–23). The find-spot of his Baḍagaṅgā Inscription, in Nowgong near Ḍavāka, also throws light on his conquests in eastern direction and in the south-west, by which he probably brought Sylhet, Tripura and other neighbouring regions under his sway (cf. Bhattasali, N. K., *J. A. R. S.*, x, pp. 63–77; *J. A. S. B.*, (Letters), i, pp. 419–27; *I. H. Q.*, xxi, p. 18 ff; Barua, K. L., *J.A.R.S.*, iii, p. 92 ff).

[2] *E. I.*, xii, p. 65 ff.

[3] Bhattasali, N. K., *J. A. S. B.* (Letters), i, pp. 419–27; *I. H. Q.*, xxi, p. 26 ff; Ghosh, J. C., *I. H. Q.*, vi, pp. 60–71; *I. C.*, ii, pp. 153–7; *Śrīhaṭṭer Itivṛitta*, iv, p. 74; Bhandarkar, D. R., *I. A.*, lxvi, pp. 41–55; 61–72.

[4] Dasgupta, N.N., *I.C.*, ii, p. 43; Choudhury, P.C., *History of Civilization of the People of Assam*, p. 195.

Here it may be recalled that the king of Kāmarūpa having come to know that Hsuan Chuang, an eminent Buddhist scholar, was studying at Nalanda, had written a letter to Śīlabhadra to send him to his capital. There is no wonder that some day evidence might be unearthed that Bhāskaravarman made endowments to the Nalanda convent even before visiting Magadha as it was his intense desire to have an insight into Buddhism, a fact which we know for certain. He might also have visited Nalanda personally on his return journey from Kānyakubja.

In view of what we have stated above, the kingdom of Bhāskaravarman included the whole of Kāmarūpa as well as a large part of Bengal. Towards east, it extended up to the borders of China and Burma as, in his description of Kāmarūpa, Hsuan Chuang has stated that in that direction "the country was a series of hills and it reached to the south-west barbarians (of China), hence the inhabitants were akin to the Man and the Lao............ .. the south-west borders of Szuchuan were distant about two months journey, but the mountains and rivers were hard to pass.........In the south-east of the country were wild elephants which ravaged in herds, and so there was a good supply of elephants for war purposes."[2] He was, therefore, rightly called the "king of Eastern India." Bhāskaravarman's reign seems to have ended in about 650 A. D. and with him came to a close one of the most glorious chapters in the history of Kāmarūpa.

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1. Sastri, H. N., *M. A. S. I.* (No. 66), pp. 69–70.
2. Watters, ii, p. 186.

The Successors of Bhāskaravarman

The death of Bhāskaravarman was followed by a period of anarchy and even disintegration of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa. The history of the latter half of the century under review is, therefore, uncertain and less known due to paucity of evidence. It is only from the records of some later kings of Kāmarūpa that we get stray references to such rulers who came after Bhāskaravarman. The Bargaon Grant of Ratnapāla, for instance, informs us that "after thus, for several generations, kings of Naraka's dynasty had ruled the whole country, a great chief of the Mlecchas, owing to a turn of (adverse) fate, took possession of the kingdom. (This was) Śālastambha. In succession to him there were chiefs altogether twice ten in number who are well-known as Vigrahastambha and the rest."[1] The Tezpur Plate of Vanamāla, who ruled over Kāmarūpa during the first half of the ninth century A. D., refers to a line of kings beginning with Śālastambha and ending in Śrī-Harisha (Harsha) and places them between the successors of Bhagadatta and Vajradatta and Prālambha, grand-father of Vanamāla.[2] Similarly, the Nowgong Copperplate Grant of Balavarman mentions Śālastambha and the princes Pālaka and Vijaya belonging to his line between the names of Vajradatta and Harjara, father of Vanamāla.[3]

The epigraphic evidences noticed above, thus, leave no room for doubt that Śālastambha was the ruler who occupied the throne of Kāmarūpa sometime after the death of Bhāskaravarman. Whether he usurped the power after dethroning the legal heir of Bhāskaravarman or not, is so far unknown to us. It is also not definitely known whether he belonged to the line of Bhāskaravarman or to the family of one of his feudatories. According to the Bargaon Copper-plate of Ratnapāla, Śālastambha belonged to a different ruling family, but a study of the Tezpur and Nowgong Plates leaves no doubt that he be-

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1. *J. A. S. B.*, lxvii, i, p. 99ff (v. 9).
2. *J. A. S. B.*, ix, ii, p. 766 ff; *J. B. O. R. S.*, iii, p. 508ff. Prālambha has also been read as Sālambha (*Age of Imperial Kanauj*, p. 79, n. 18. Cf. also *ibid.*, n. 21).
3. *J. A. S. B.*, lxvi, p. 285ff.

longed to the line of Naraka and Bhagadatta.[1] The Paśupati Inscription of the Nepalese king Jayadeva II also mentions Rājyamatī, daughter of Harshadeva, a successor of Śālastambha, as "*Bhagadattarājakulaja*."[2] Epigraphy thus seems to confirm the view that Śālastambha belonged to the same royal family as the Varmans and was, perhaps, one of their collaterals.

According to Ray "the question whether Śālastambha established a separate line or whether he belonged to a collateral branch of Pushyavarman's family cannot be easily decided. The fact that Śālastambha is called a *Mlechchhādinātha* while Bhāskaravarman is referred to by Yuan Chwang as belonging to the Brāhman caste is not conclusive.[3] For, as we have seen, the latter in his Nidhanpur inscription traces his descent to Bhagadatta, who is described in the *Mahābhārata* as '*Prāgjyotishādhipaḥ śūro mlechchhānām adhipo balī.*' If there is any historical fact in the description of the Great Epic, then it is reasonable to regard Bhagadatta as a prince of the non-Aryan Tibeto-Chinese races referred to as Cīnas and Kirātas in ancient Indian Literature........... It appears that the lines of Puṣyavarman and that of Śālastambha were closely related, in as much as both were of Mongolian origin. Though there is sufficient looseness in expressions of the Tejpur plates of Vanamāla and the Nowgong plates of Balavarman to suggest the descent of Śālastambha from Bhagadatta, yet it would probably be safer to regard the two dynasties as separate Mongoloid groups who each accepted Aryan culture and sought to establish their blue blood by claiming descent from that great Epic hero."[1] Ray has evidently tried to minimise the epigraphic evidence to prove his own contentions. We, on the other hand, feel that in the light of the epigraphic evidences cited above, it is more than probable that Śālastambha was a scion of the Varman family, as both claim their origin from Bhagadatta.

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[1] *J. A. S. B.*, ix, p. 766; *ibid.*, 1897, p. 285.
Cf. *Kāmarūpa Śāsanāvalī*, p. 1º; *I. H. Q.*, iii, p. 844.

[2] *I. A*, ix, p. 175 ff.

[3] Beal, ii, p. 196; Watters, ii, p. 186.

Hsuan Chuang describes "Kumāra (Bhāskaravarman) of Kāmarūpa as a Brahman. But his inscription describes him as the descendant of Naraka and Bhagadatta, who do not appear to have been Brāhmanas (*E. I.*, xii, pp. 71–2). It is, however, pointed out by Dr. Raychaudhuri that the claim to Brahmanhood may have been based upon descent from Nārāyaṇa Deva(possibly to be identified with Vishṇu, son of *ṛishi* Kaśyapa). (Y.C., ii, p.186). Nārāyaṇa, it is well known, was the father of Naraka, according to Purāṇic legends" (*Dynastic History of Northern India*, i p. 5, n. 5).

The word *Mlechchha* used for Śālastambha does not prove, as suggested by Hoernle, that he was a foreigner.[2] As stated above, the epithet specifically used to refer to Bhagadatta in the *Mahābhārata* is *Mlechchhādhipa* and the same to Śālastambha is *Mlechchhādināthа*. We wonder how these two expressions suggest the barbarian origin of the royal family to which they are said to belong, when both of them clearly suggest that they ruled over the *Mlechchhas* and were not *Mlechchhas* themselves. The kings of Kāmarūpa were bound to rule over the *Mlechchhas* in view of the fact that the bulk of population in Assam in those days was comprised of Tibetan and Tibeto-Burman origin as it is also to-day. This ethnological fact has sadly been missed by the above mentioned scholars and curious theories relating to the origin of the families of Bhāskaravarman and Śālastambha have been propounded by them. Another significant fact which has been overlooked by the aforesaid historians is that the names of the rulers of Kāmarūpa which are available to us from relevant epigrabhic records are inflexional and not monosyllabic in character, which they ought to have been if they were of Mongoloid origin. In our humble opinion, while determining the origin of the ruling families of Kāmarūpa from the ethnological point of view, all these facts should be given a very careful consideration—both individually and collectively. That linguistics plays a role of no less importance in historical evaluations, has been accepted by all scholars.

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[1] *Dynastic History of Northern India*, i, pp. 239–41; Cf. Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 141, n. 3.

[2] *J. A. S. B.*, lxvii, i, pp. 103–4.

In view of what we have hitherto seen, Śālastambha appears to have been a scion of a collateral branch of Bhāskaravarman's family who came to the throne sometime after the death of the latter. He was thus the founder of a new line of kings but was related to the former ruling family. He ruled from Harūppeśvara, on the bank of the Lauhitya instead of Prāgjyotishapura. Very little is, however, known to us about the reign of this king. So far as his successors are concerned, the epigraphic records merely furnish a few names. The Hayunthal Copper-plate Inscription of Harjaravarman simply states that on the death of Śālastambha, his brave son Vijaya, the vanquisher of enemies, became the mighty lord of the earth, and the Nowgong Copper-plate also records his name.[1] The Bargaon Copper-plates of Ratnapāla call him Vigrahastambha.[2] According to the Hayunthal Copper-plate Inscription, Vijaya was followed in succession by Pālaka, Kumāra and Vajradeva. They are merely non-descripts since nothing noteworthy is known about the history of their reign.

The reign of Śālastambha and his successors, however, was a period which witnessed the gradual disintegration of the Kāmarūpa kingdom. The Tipperah Copper-plate Inscription of Lokanātha, which is believed by Basak, on palaeographic grounds, to belong to the middle of the seventh century A.D., refers to a period of anarchy (*mātsyanyāya*) in East Bengal, apparently after the death of Bhāskaravarman.[3] The same source also refers to a number of battles, which Lokanātha, a feudatory chief, had to fight against other rulers of that region, obviously to gain paramountcy. The Ashrafpur Copper-plates and a short inscription on an image of Śarvāṇī (Durgā) found at Deulbadi introduce us to a new line of rulers viz., the Khaḍgas, who carved out a kingdom in Samataṭa during the latter half of the seventh century A.D.[1] All this evidence conclusively proves the disintegration of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa during the period when Śālastambha and his successors were ruling there.

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[1] *J. A. R. S.*, i, p. 109 ff; *J. A. S. B.*, lxvi, p. 285 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 99 ff.

As Vigrahastambha is mentioned as the successor of Śālastambha, Hoernle thought that *Stambha* was the distinguishing name of this line of rulers. But it should be noticed that *Stambha* is not a part of the names of the other successors of Śālastambha mentioned below.

[3] *E. I.*, xv, pp. 301–15.

For a discussion on the date of the inscription, see Basak, *H. N. E. I.*, p. 195 ff.

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[1] *M. A. S. B.*, i, No. 6, pp. 85–91; *E.I.*, xvii, p. 357 ff; *J. A. S. B.* (N. S.), xix (1923), pp. 375–9; *ibid.*, x (1914), pp. 85–91.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAITRAKAS OF VALABHĪ

Origin of the Maitrakas

The Maitrakas of Valabhī occupy an important place in the political history of Western India during the period under review.[1] It is really unfortunate that, inspite of the discovery of a very large number of inscriptions of the rulers of that family, there is a sharp difference of opinion amongst scholars in respect of its origin. Some scholars who had previously discussed this problem were of opinion that the Maitrakas were sun-worshippers and, as such, of foreign origin.[2] Bhagwan Lal Indraji connects that royal family with the *Mihira* tribe about which our information is next to nothing.[3] Bhandarkar and Fleet hold the view that it was a section of the Hūṇa tribe which had come to India in the wake of the latter's invasion.[4] Ray also endorses the opinions of these two above mentioned scholars, but without adducing any special reasons for the same.[5] An altogether different view of its origin has been taken by Jackson who has connected it with the Gurjaras and not with the Hūṇas.[6] The main arguments of almost all these scholars in considering the Maitrakas to have been of foreign extraction has been based on and around the hypothesis that they were sun-worshipping people and connected with the *Mihiras*.[7] Curiously enough, out of a

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1. Valabhī corresponds with modern Vala or Wala in Eastern Kathiawar, 20 miles to the north-west of Bhavnagar.
2. *I. A.*, xv, p. 360 ff.
3. *J. A. S. B.*, 1909, p. 184.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 183; *I. A.*, viii, 1886, p. 303.
5. *I. H. Q.*, p. 457, iv 1928.
6. *Bombay Gazetteer*, i, p. 81.
7. Some scholars have derived the word *Maitraka* from Sanskrit *Mitra* or son (corresponding to old Persian Mithra). Although both *Mihira* and *Mitra* stand for Sun in Sanskrit, the occurrence of the *Taddhita* from 'Maitraka' in Sanskrit literature, in the sense of 'Sun-worshipper', is, so far, unknown to us,

large number of rulers of that family, only one, Dharapaṭṭa, is definitely known to have been the worshipper of the Sun-god (*Paramāditya bhakta*), while all others were the devotees of Śiva and assumed the title *Paramamāheśvera*. A fact of prime importance which should be noted here in this connection is that in all the copper-plate grants of the Maitraka kings we come across the figure of a recumbent bull (*Nandī*), which is both mythologically and traditionally associated with Śiva. Recently, a scholar has connected the word *Maitraka* with Maitreyakas and taken it to connote a tribe of bards like the latter. Going a step still further, he considers the ancestors of the Maitrakas of Valabhī to have been originally the bards of the Gupta monarchs.[1] To what extent he is justified in connecting these two names, whether of tribes or of castes, is a matter which cannot be easily decided in absence of direct literary evidence. Virji has pointed out that, grammatically also, the two words have different derivations. Maitraka comes from 'Mitra,' while Maitreyaka is derived from 'Mitrā.'[2]

Hsuan Chuang, who visited Valabhī in 640 A. D., has recorded that the ruling king Dhruvasena was of *Kshatriya* caste and the son-in-law of Harsha.[3] The fact that the Pushpabhūti emperor had given his daughter in marriage to the king of Valabhī lends support to the view that the latter must have descended from a noble family. The account of the Chinese pilgrim in fact confirms the tradition about the origin of Valabhī kings; and we feel no hesitation in accepting his statement as correct.[4] The epigraphs, too, describe them as

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1. Jagan Nath, *I. C.*, v, p. 409. According to him, 'Maitreyaka' means a particular caste whose business it was to praise great men.
2. Virji, *Ancient History of Saurāshṭra*, p. 19.
3. Watters, ii, p. 246; Beal, ii, p. 246.
4. According to tradition, Guhilots of Mewar and the Sesodias of Udaipur, who are considered to be the purest *Kshatriyas*, claim descent from the epic hero, Rāma of Ayodhyā, as also from the Maitrakas of Valabhī (*Bombay Gazetteer*, i, i, p. 86; Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, i, pp. 100, 255). The old Rajput tradition relating to the origin of these two tribes, as recorded by James Tod, is, however, falsified by the ethnological evidence available in the Buddhist *Āryamañjuśrīmūla-*

belonging to a warlike tribe, who were noted for their valour and heroic deeds. Both *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* and the Jain work, *Śatruñjaya Māhātmya*, consider them to have belonged to the Yādava family and Kshatriyas of Lunar descent.[1] Taking the different lines of evidence into consideration, we are inclined to believe that the Maitrakas of Valabhī were of Kshatriya origin and noted for their noble lineage.[2]

Early History of the family

The inscriptions belonging to the rulers of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhī leave no doubt that the founder of that royal family was Senāpati Bhaṭārka.[3] It is alleged that he

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kalpa and the Jaina *Śatruñjaya Māhātmya*, in both of which the Maitrakas have been described as belonging to the Lunar race. It is needless to mention here that king Rāmachandra of Ayodhyā belonged to the line of Ikshvāku and thus to the Solar race.

[1] Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, p. 26;
Dhaneśvarasūri, *Śatruñjaya Māhātmya*, v, 14, sarga 1.

[2] Cf. Virji, *Ancient History of Saurāshṭra*, p. 19, n. 7.

[3] According to Smith "the original and more authentic form of the name is Bhaṭakka" (*Early History of India*, p. 332, n. 2). The copper-plate grants of the early rulers of Valabhī in fact mention that form of his name. Later, the name is mentioned as Bhaṭārka. Bhaṭārka is a Sanskritized spelling (*E.I.*, vi, p. 105). The other forms of the same name that we come across are Bhaṭṭārkka and Bhaṭṭārka.

Curiously enough, Bhaṭārka, the name of the founder of the Maitraka dynasty, itself offers a possible explanation for tracing the descent of the family from the Sun-god. While the name has been variously spelt in numerous inscriptions, it invariably ends with '*Arka*' or '*Arkka*' as the latter half of the name—meaning sun. Even '*Bhaṭākka*' is suggestive of the same meaning. It is quite possible that the bardic traditions of his descent from the Sun-god grew around his name and, as it appears, gained further strength from the synonymous nature of the words 'Arka' and 'Mitra'.

Formerly, due to wrong translation of the opening passage of the copper-plate grants of the Valabhī kings, it was held for a long time that Bhaṭārka successfully fought and defeated the Maitrakas (Mandalik, *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, xi, p. 346; Bhandarkar, *I.A.*, i, p. 14; Kielhorn, was a high military official under some ruler of the Imperial Gupta house, posted in Saurāshṭra. Local traditions current in Saurāshṭra affirm that king Bhaṭārka was formerly an army officer of superior rank in the service of Skandagupta, apparently of the Imperial Gupta House. He belonged to some noble family (the Guhilots ?) of the city of Ayodhyā and, after being appointed to the post of *Senāpati*, he was sent to Saurāshṭra to act as its governor, or rather military governor for the express purpose of administering and defending that distant province of the empire. From the same source we also learn that he succeeded Chakrapālita (Chakrapāṇi) in the administration of that province. A military genius, an able administrator and an astute politician as he was, he took the fullest advantage of his master's inability (?) to rule over those distant parts of his empire. Further, according to this tradition, during the later period of Skandagupta's reign, either because of his old age and infirmity or because of incessant troubles in the interior of his dominions, Bhaṭārka threw off his allegiance to Skandagupta and proclaimed himself as an independent ruler of the province of which he was placed in charge.[1] The aforesaid tradition, still current locally in

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ibid., xiv, p. 327; Bühler, *I.A.*, iv, p. 106; Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 167 (Intro., p. 13). Hultzsch was the first to point out the mistake and he has shown that, according to correct interpretation of the passage in question, the Maitrakas were not the tribe or family defeated by Bhaṭārka but that the latter himself belonged to the Maitraka family (*E.I.*, iii, p. 320 ff). This view is now accepted by almost all scholars.

[1] The tradition as recorded by watson runs thus: "The Gupta kings reigned between the Ganges and the Jamuna rivers. One of the kings sent his son Kumārapālagupta to conquer Surāṣṭra and put his viceroy, *Cakrapāṇi* son of *Prāndat*, one of his Amirs, to reign as a provincial governor in the city of Wāmanasthali (mod. Wanthali). Kumārapāla now returned to his father's kingdom. His father reigned 23 years after the conquest of Surāṣṭra, and then died, and Kumārapāla ascended the throne. Kumārapālagupta reigned 20 years and then died and was succeeded by Skandagupta. But this king was of a weak

Saurāshṭra, is indeed interesting and we cannot deny that it contains some grains of historical truth in it. We are, however, not certain whether it had its origin in the court-traditions of the Imperial Guptas or that of the royal house of the Maitrakas of Valabhī. We cannot consider it to be unique in respect of its character since similar traditions are current in Rajasthan even to-day in respect of the different royal houses which had ruled there, claiming connection with, or descent from, the Sun, the Moon or Fire. We, therefore, are not in a position to question its historical value or reject it altogether as unacceptable to sober history except for the traditional affirmation that the founder of the Maitraka family of Valabhī was a Guhilot from Ayodhyā. The Guhilots, it may be mentioned here, neither existed in the early Gupta period, nor was their traditional ancestral home at Ayodhyā. It is quite probable that Senāpati Bhaṭārka succeeded Chakrapālita as the governor of Saurāshṭra; and, during the period of the decline of the Gupta power following the death of Skandagupta, he might have become independent and carved out a kingdom for himself with Valabhī (Vala) as his seat of government.[1] This assumption receives further support from

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intellect. His Senāpati, Bhaṭṭāraka who was of the Gheloti race, taking a strong army, came into Surāṣṭra and made his rule firm there. Two years after this Skandagupta died. The Senāpati now assumed the title of king of Surāṣṭra and, having placed a governor at Wamanasthali, founded the city of Valabhīnagara. At this time the Gupta race was dethroned by foreign invaders. The Senāpati was a Ghelot and his fore-fathers reigned at Ayodhyānagarī until displaced by the Gupta dynasty. After founding Valabhī, he established his rule in Sourāṣṭra, Kaccha, Lāṭadeśa and Mālava. The Vala were a branch of the Ghelots. After the fall of Valabhī, the Vala governor of Wamanasthali became independent" (*I.A.*, ii, p. 312 ff).

[1] Girinagara had been the capital of Saurāshṭra since very early times and continued to enjoy that position till the reign of Skandagupta (See Chatterji, C.D., D.R. Bhandarkar Volume, p. 329, n. 3). What led to the transfer of the seat of government from there to Valabhī is

two important facts. In the first place, it is too well-known a fact that, so far, not a single epigraphic or numismatic evidence has been discovered which might prove the continuance of Gupta rule over Saurāshṭra after the death of Skandagupta. Secondly, we know that the Maitraka kings of Valabhī had adopted the Gupta Era for dating their official records These facts leave no room for doubt that the Maitrakas were the immediate successors of the Imperial Guptas in Saurāshṭra and that, in all probability, taking fullest advantage of the Gupta weaklings at centre, threw off their yoke of allegiance to them and, at the same time, retained the vestiges of their one-time rule over those regions obviously by maintaining their Era. The name of Bhaṭārka is mentioned with greatest admiration and respect in all inscriptions of the Valabhī rulers. It is, however, unfortunate that so far not a single record belonging to the reign of the founder of the dynasty has come to light, while more than a hundred inscriptions of his successors have so far been discovered. These epigraphs have proved very helpful in tracing their genealogy as well as in determining the chronological sequence of the rulers belonging to that family. On the basis of available genealogical table and chronological dates, their names may be arranged as follows :

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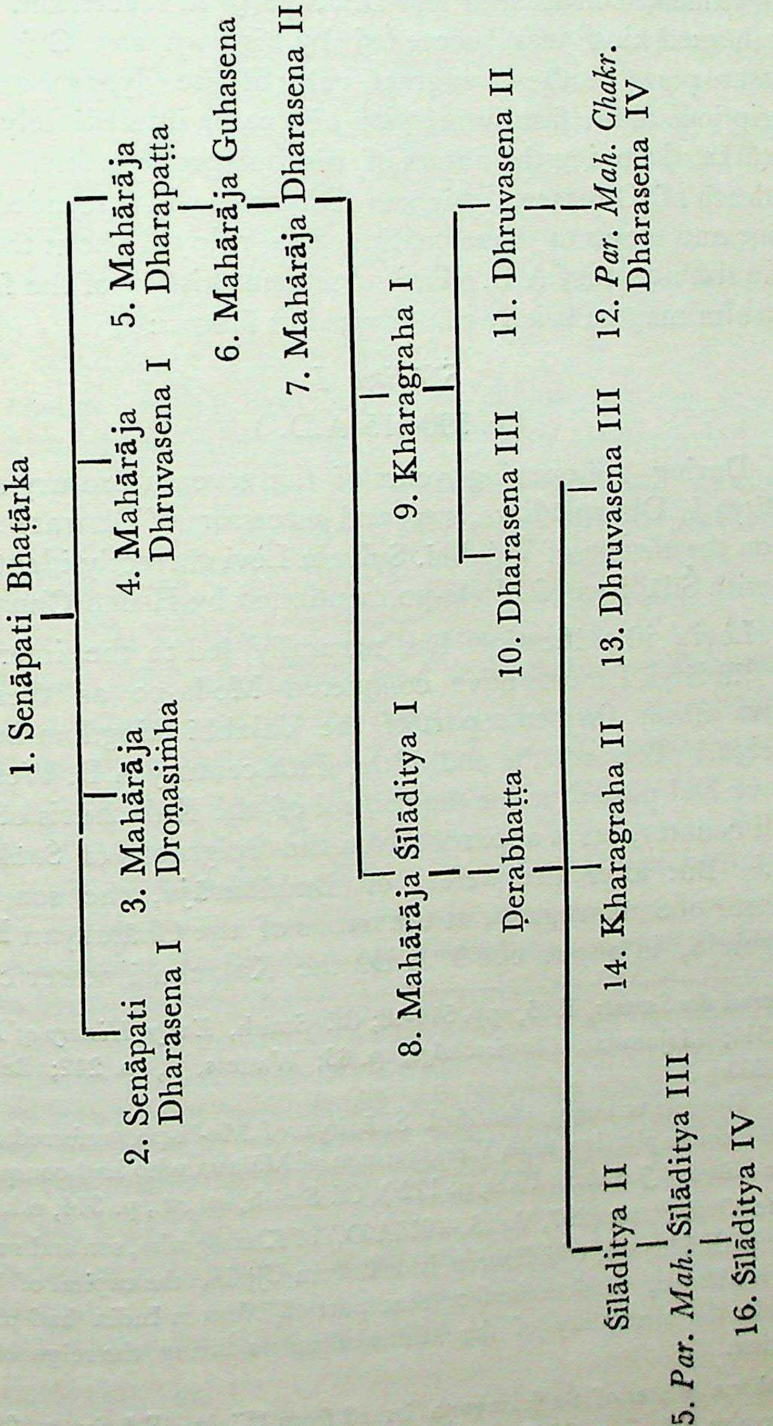
so far unknown to us. According to the Bombay Gazetteer (i, i, p. 96ff) the choice of Valabhī "as a capital was probably due to its being a harbour on the Bhavnagar creek. The place was not so much inland as it is now. Since the days of Valabhī kings the silt which thickly covers the ruins has also filled and choked the channel which once united it with the Bhavnagar creek when Ghala was probably a fair-sized river." Another opinion is that the repeated bursting of the dam of the Sudarśana lake during many a rainy season became a regular menace and a source of grave anxiety to the people and "the result was that the city was either voluntarily evacuated, or deserted after having been washed away" (Jagan Nath, *I.C.*, v, p. 414).


1. Senāpati Bhaṭārka
2. Senāpati Dharasena I
3. Mahārāja Droṇasiṁha
4. Mahārāja Dhruvasena I
5. Mahārāja Dharapaṭṭa
6. Mahārāja Guhasena
7. Mahārāja Dharasena II
8. Mahārāja Śīlāditya I
9. Kharagraha I
Ḍerabhaṭṭa
10. Dharasena III
11. Dhruvasena II
12. Par. Mah. Chakr. Dharasena IV
Śīlāditya II
13. Dhruvasena III
14. Kharagraha II
15. Par. Mah. Śīlāditya III
16. Śīlāditya IV

Bhaṭārka was succeeded by his four sons, Dharasena, Droṇasiṁha, Dhruvasena and Dharapaṭṭa in succession. The last named king was succeeded by his own son Guhasena. He was perhaps the first great ruler of the dynasty as later inscriptions of the family mention his name immediately after Bhaṭārka, dropping the names of his four predecessors. After the death of Guhasena, his son Dharasena II ascended the throne and seems to have continued to rule till about the end of the sixth century A.D. The subsequent history of the family after him may be briefly summarised as follows:

Śīlāditya I

(c. 590-615 A.D.)

During the opening years of the seventh century A.D., Śīlāditya I Dharmāditya, son and successor of Dharasena II, was on the throne of Valabhī. Sylvain Lèvi correctly identified him with Śīlāditya of Mo-la-po mentioned by Hsuan Chuang.[1]

Lèvi's identification has naturally led to the inference that Śīlāditya I must have conquered Mo-la-po as Western Mālava never formed a part of the Valabhī kingdom before his reign.[2] Towards the end of the sixth century A.D. Western Mālava had passed under the control of the Kalachuris of the Chedi country, as is apparent from the epigraphs of Śaṅkaragaṇa.[3] But after the defeat of Buddharāja, the son and successor of Śaṅkaragaṇa, at the hands of the Chālukyan King Maṅgaleśa, in about 608-9 A.D., the Kalachuri power came to an end in Western Mālava.[1] The Chālukyas, however, do not seem to have been able to enjoy the fruits of their achievements in Western India for long, as, soon after, towards the end of Maṅgaleśa's reign (c. 608 A.D.), there was a struggle for power between him and his nephew, Pulakeśin II, which plunged the entire kingdom in anarchy and chaos.[2] These events must have, naturally, created a political vacuum in Western Mālava and the Maitraka ruler seems to have taken advantage of it by annexing it to his kingdom.[3] During this period, Valabhī may, therefore, be taken to have been the largest kingdom in Western India.

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[1] *Journal des Savants*, 1905, pp. 544-48; Cf. Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 344; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 63; Watters, ii, p. 242; Beal, ii, p. 260.

Hoernle wrongly identified Śīlāditya of Mo-la-po, referred to by the Chinese pilgrim, with Yaśodharman of Mālava who had conquered the Hūṇas (*J.R.A.S.*, 1909, p. 122). Cf. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 344, n.l.

[2] The Virdi Plates (297, Val.S.=616A.D.) of Kharagraha, son and successor of Śīlāditya I, which were issued from Ujjain, the capital of Western Mālava, confirm the fact that part of Western India had passed under the suzerainty of the Maitraka rulers during the reign of his father.

[3] Abhona Plates of Śaṅkaragaṇa issued from Ujjain, *E.I.*, ix, p. 299 ff. See also *E.I.*, ii, p. 26 ff.

Hsuan Chuang has referred to Śīlāditya as "a monarch of great administrative ability, and of rare kindness and compassion."[4] He has also lauded him as a person of eminent wisdom and great learning.[5] These observations of the Chinese pilgrim are corroborated by the epigraphic records where the Maitraka ruler has been described as a person of extreme generosity and intellectual attainments in addition to being a gifted poet. His munificence and catholicity are reflected in the large number of grants discovered so far recording his liberal donations to institutions as well as individuals, irrespective of caste and creed. Though, like other rulers of the House, he was a Śaiva, the inscriptions record his grants to a temple of the Sun-god and also to monastic establishments of the Jainas and the Buddhists.[1] All these fully justify his assumptions of the title of Dharmāditya.[2]

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[1] Mahakuta Pillar Inscription of Maṅgaleśa, *I.A.*, xix, p. 19 ff. See also *I.A.*, vii, p. 162; *E.I.*, vi, p. 8.

According to the Mahakuta Pillar Inscription and the Nerur Grant, Buddharāja was defeated before 602 A.D. But from the Vadner Grant of the year 360 we learn that the Kalachuri king was in possession of Nasik till 608 A. D. It, therefore, appears that the Chālukyas took some time in crushing the power of the Kalachuris.

[2] *I.A.*, viii, p. 242; *E.I.*, vi, p. 1 ff.

[3] The regions to the south of the river Mahi were annexed by the Gurjaras who carved out a principality for themselves in the neighbourhood of Bhārukachchha during the same period, as we shall see below.

[4] Watters, ii, p. 242.

[5] *Ibid.*, Beal, ii, pp. 260-62.

According to the data available from the Valabhī records, Śīlāditya I seems to have ruled for a period of about twentyfive years. The last known date of his father, whom he succeeded, is 270 (=589 A.D.) while the earliest available date of his successor Kharagraha I is 2.7 (=616 A.D.).[3] The *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, however, assigns him a reign of thirty years.[4]

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Kharagraha I

(c. 615–622 A D.)

Śīlāditya I was succeeded by his brother Kharagraha I.[5] The inscriptions of the family make it abundantly clear that the former undoubtedly had a son named Ḍerabhaṭa; but we have absolutely no information, whatsoever, of the circumstances under which his claims to the Valabhī throne had been waived in favour of Kharagraha, the late king's brother.[6] That Kharagraha had already been associated with

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[1] *E.I.*, xxi, p. 117; *Śatruñjaya-Māhātmya*, v. 286.

[2] This is the first instance, amongst the kings of Valabhī, of assuming a *biruda*, probably in imitation of the practice of the Imperial Guptas whom they had succeeded in Saurāshṭra.

[3] Alina Copper Plates of Dharasena II, *I.A.*, vii, p. 71; Amreli Plates of Kharagraha I, Gadre, *Important Inscriptions of the Baroda State*, p. 7; Virdi Copper Plate, Gadre, *Proceedings of the Seventh All India Oriental Conference*, p. 659 ff.

[4] Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, p. 24.

[5] A Valabhī Grant also mentions him as Īśvaragraha (*I.A.*, i, p. 17).

[6] The inscriptions of the later kings of the Maitraka dynasty describe Ḍerabhaṭa as a prince of great ability and power. But they maintain strict silence about the circumstances under which he came to lose the throne.

According to Raychaudhuri, after the death of Śīlāditya I "the Maitraka dominions split up into two parts, one part including Mo-la-po and its dependencies probably obeying the line of Śīlāditya Dharmāditya, the other part, including Valabhī, obeying Kharagraha and his sons, one of whom was Dhruvasena II, Bālāditya or Dhruvabhaṭa, who married the daughter of Harsha of Kanauj." His observations his brother in the administration of the realm is also apparent from the land-grants of the latter where the former has been styled as the *dūtaka*.

The inscriptions mention Kharagraha as a noble-hearted person who "was not tainted by any of the faults that assert an ascendancy over inferior people."[1] About his personal accomplishments, we learn that he was skilled in the use of missiles.[2]

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are based on the accounts of the Chinese traveller, Hsuan Chuang. In support of his statement, he cites the Alina Copper-plate of Śīlāditya VII, (*C. I. I.*, iii, p. 171 ff., esp. 182, n.) which associates Ḍerabhaṭa, the son of Śīlāditya I, with the sovereignty of the regions between the Sahya (Western Ghats) and Vindhyan mountains, and the descendants of Kharagraha I, with that of Valabhī (*Political History of Ancient India*, p. 629, n. 4). Though it is true that due to some domestic trouble or political exigency, instead of Ḍerabhaṭa, his uncle Kharagraha I ascended the throne, the former continued to associate himself for some reason or the other with the administration of the Valabhī kingdom. In the epigraphic records of the later Maitraka kings, he is referred to as the "Lord of the Earth" extending between the Western Ghats (Sahya) and the Vindhyan range (*C. I. I.*, iii, p. 184). It is quite possible that he might have been appointed the vicerory of those newly conquered regions by his uncle. That Kharagraha I was the ruler of the regions extending up to Ujjain, has also been confirmed by the Virdi Copper-plate Grant (of the year 297=616-17 A.D.) of that king. The fact that Ḍerabhaṭa was not an independent ruler, is further confirmed by the charters issued from the time of Śīlāditya I to that of Dhruvabhaṭṭa III, which,without exception, exclude his name from the dynastic list preserved therein. The name of Ḍerabhaṭa occurs in the land-grants of the Maitrakas only when his grandson, Dhruvasena III, reestablished himself on the Valabhī throne after Dhruvasena IV, the last known ruler in the line of Kharagraha I. Regarding the theory of Raychaudhuri that the Valabhī kingdom was partitioned after the death of Śīlāditya I between his brother Kharagraha I and his son Ḍerabhaṭa, it may be mentioned here that there is no specific mention of it in the epigraphic records of the family. It is, however, possible that Kharagraha I accumulated much power during the reign of his brother, as he had been for long associated with the administration of the kingdom, as stated above, and was thus successful in bypassing the claims of his nephew Ḍerabhaṭa.

1. *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 182.
2. *Proc. of the Seventh A.I. Oriental Conf.*, p. 659.

Kharagraha probably had a very short rule, as he ascended the throne at an advanced age. Except for the stereotyped expressions used by the panegyrists to glorify his achievements, virtually nothing noteworthy is known about his reign from the few records of his time which are available to us. As the last known date of his predecessor is 611 A.D. (292) and the earliest available date from his own records is 616 A.D. (297), we have fixed his accession in c. 615 A.D. The only known date of his successor, Dharasena III, is 623 A.D. (305).[1] He had, thus, the opportunity to rule for a short duration of about eight years only.

Dharasena III

(c. 622-626 A.D.)

Dharasena III succeeded his father Kharagraha I in about 623 A.D. So far, only one inscription, the Bhavnagar Copper-plate bearing the date 304 and belonging to his period of reign has come to light.[2] This inscription was issued from his military camp at Kheṭaka.[3] It suggests, if anything, that Dharasena had waged war against one of his unknown political rivals or had made preparations in advance to defend his kingdom from being attacked by some neighbouring power. Who that enemy of the Valabhī kingdom was, is difficult to say. So far as our information goes, the only powerful ruler who had waged war in Western India during this period was the mighty Chālukya Emperor Pulakeśin II. But the Aihole Inscription of that ruler, which gives a detailed and graphic account of his wars and conquests, naming the kings and regions conquered by him, does not even mention the Maitrakas by name.[4] In case the Maitraka king had been defeated or his territories conquered, Ravikīrti would certainly have mentioned in his *praśasti*, as in the cases of other kings who had been defeated by that powerful Chālukyan monarch. It is, therefore, difficult to make any suggestions regarding that potential enemy against whom the Valabhī king had taken ample precautionary measures in self-defence.[1]

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[1] Bhavnagar Copper-plate Inscription, *E.I.*, xxi, p. 181 ff.

[2] *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, (NS), iii, p. 185; *E.I.*, xxi, p. 181. The Gopanath Copper-plate Grant is also considered to have been issued during the reign of Dharasena III, but, as only the first plate of the grant is available, the rest being lost, the date of the inscription is not known.

[3] Kheṭaka is identical with Kaira.

[4] *E.I.*, vi, p. 9 ff.

Dharasena has been styled as *parama-māheśvara* in his Bhavnagar Copper-plate Inscription. The title of 'Mahārāja' assumed by his predecessors has not been applied to him in that record. This fact has led some scholars to suggest that the power and prestige of the Valabhī dynasty had suffered considerably during the reign of Dharasena III. Since only one inscription of his reign has so far been discovered, it is difficult to make any definite assertion in respect of the same. The reign of Dharasena appears to have been brief like that of his predecessor.

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1. In case the latter interpretation—that of his making ample military preparations to defend his territories against some designing foe unnamed in the inscription-be correct, a plausible conjecture, in keeping with the political context of the times, may be hazarded here. The omission of the very name of the Maitrakas in the Aihole inscription and the warlike preparations of Dharasena III might be taken to indicate an intended conquest of Valabhī by the Chālukyan monarch, which, for certain reasons did not materialise. A suitable reason for this non-materialisation may be found in the subsequent clash of the two most powerful rulers of the North and South—Harsha and Pulakeśin II. The latter, probably having come to know of the intended invasion of that Pushpabhūti king, might have conserved his military strength for the battle-royal, and even though he did intend to attack Valabhī, prudence and foresight prompted him not to do so. Dharasena III, on the other hand, might have taken defensive measures against such an emergency. As for his not mentioning the intending aggressor by name in his inscription, it would have been most unstatesmanlike to do so, as it might have invited aggression and attack by furnishing reasons for provocation. It may further be pointed out that this hypothesis is quite in keeping with the sequence of events that, according to our chronological computations, subsequently followed. Another reason for Dharasena's military mobilisation is also possible if the former interpretation–that of his having actually waged a war against an unknown adversary–be taken to be correct; it may refer either to an internal strife or border fray with some not-too-significant an adversary struggling for power.

Dhruvasena II

(c. 626-642 A.D.)

The successor of Dharasena III was his younger brother, Dhruvasena II. As already mentioned above, he ascended the throne in 626 A.D. The Navsari Copper-plate grant of Jayabhaṭa II throws interesting sidelights on the history of his reign. According to this inscription, Dadda II "gave protection to the lord of Valabhī, who had been defeated by the great lord, the illustrious Harshadeva."[1] Unfortunately, the name of that Valabhī king has not been recorded in that epigraph. Hsuan Chuang has, however, mentioned that the reigning king of Valabhī, Dhruvabhaṭa (Tu-lu-po-pa-cha) was the nephew of Śīlāditya, who had ruled sixty years before his visit, and was the son-in-law of Harsha.[2] The king of Valabhī, who was a contemporary of Dadda II, was Dhruvasena II (c. 629-641 A.D.). We may, therefore, reasonably identify Dhruvabhaṭa, mentioned by the Chinese traveller, with that Valabhī ruler, who, after being defeated, took shelter with the Gurjara ruler who was his immediate neighbour and a feudatory of the Chālukyan king, Pulakeśin II. Harsha, however, won him over by offering him not only the throne of Valabhī but also the hand of his daughter.[3]

Dhruvasena thus seems to have accepted the position of a feudatory of Harsha and the latter also, on account of the former being his son-in-law, entrusted him with the administration of other regions as well in Western India which had been conquered by him during his march towards Valabhī.[4]

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[1] *I.A.*, xiii, p. 76; *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, xvi, p. 1 ff.

[2] Watters, ii, p. 246; Beal, ii, p. 267.

Julien transcribes the name of the reigning king as "Tu-lo-po-po-tu" and he restores the name as Dhruvapaṭu (Watters, ii, p. 247). The variations regarding the latter half of the name Dhruvabhaṭṭa or Dhruvabhaṭa are immaterial.

[3] It seems rather strange that such an important matrimonial alliance has not been referred to in any one of the inscriptions, either of the time of Harsha or those of the Maitrakas.

[4] Cf. Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 343; Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 31; Sircar, *Proceedings of the All India Oriental Conference*, xiii, p. 525.

This fact is affirmed by the Nogawa Copper-plate Grants of the years 639 and 640 A.D. (320 and 321) which confirm that the political supremacy of the Valabhī king in question extended right up to Ujjain in Western Mālava, although that region had passed into the hands of Harsha by virtue of his conquests.[1] This relationship explains the presence of the Valabhī king Dhruvasena alias Dhruvabhaṭṭa at the Quinquennial Assembly of Harsha held at Prayāga, which was also attended by his other satellites and feudatories.[2]

Most of the epigraphic records belonging to the time of Dhruvasena speak highly of his accomplishments and character. The Nogawa Plates refer to his proficiency in arts, polity and grammar.[3] Hsuan Chuang, however, maintains a different view of his kingly qualities, when he says that he was of "a lively and hasty disposition and his wisdom and statecraft were shallow."[4] The pilgrim praises him for his patronage of Buddhism and the lavish charities which he gave to the saṅgha.[5] This obviously cannot be taken to mean that he was a proclaimed Buddhist, since, in all his inscriptions hitherto unearthed, he has been styled as *paramamāheśvara*, like other rulers belonging to his family, whether predecessors or successors.

Dhruvasena, like his predecessor Śīlāditya I, also assumed the title of 'Bālāditya'. His last known date is 640 A.D. (321) while the earliest one of his son and successor, Dharasena IV, is 645 A.D. (326).[6] We, therefore, have tentatively accepted 642 A.D. as the last year of the reign of Dhruvasena II.

Dharasena IV

(c. 643-650 A.D.)

After the death of Dhruvasena II, his son Dharasena IV ascended the throne in c. 643 A.D. He was the greatest and the most powerful of all the Maitraka kings. Unlike his predecessors, he assumed a number of imperialistic titles, to wit, *paramabhaṭṭāraka*, *mahārājādhirāja*, *parameśvara* and even *Chakravartin.*[1] It is interesting to note that, although the title *Mahārājādhirāja* had figured in the inscriptions of some of his predecessors, none of them assumed the title *Chakravartin* (the universal sovereign). This appellation in itself clearly indicates that Dharasena had made wide conquests and consequently ruled over a much larger dominion than any of his predecessors. It was indeed fortunate that he came to the throne at a very opportune moment. We already know that the reign of the two most powerful rulers of the time, Harsha and Pulakeśin II, who had almost divided the whole of the country between themselves by their extensive conquests, came to an end in about 646-47 and 642 A.D. respectively. Also, it is too well-known a fact that, after the death of both the emperors, chaos and confusion had overtaken their mighty empires. The absence of any imperial power would have naturally provided ample opportunities for the ambitious feudatories to become independent and Dharasena seems to have made fullest use of the same. In support of the above, we should take cognisance of two of his land grants, dated in the year 330 (649-50 A.D.), which were issued from "his victorious camp at Bhārukachchha", the capital of a Gurjara kingdom during that period.[2] The suggestion–that the Valabhī king was enjoying the hospitality of his Gurjara contemporary at Bhārukachchha at the time of the issue of these two royal charters–is not at all convincing.[3] The fact that the charters in question were issued from his "victorious" camp at Bhārukachchha, definitely shows that Dharasena had reached that principal town of the Gurjara kingdom in the

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[1] *E.I.*, viii, pp. 194 and 196.

[2] *Life*, p. 185.

[3] *E.I.*, viii, p. 192 ff; *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 183.

[4] Beal, ii, p. 267.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *E.I.*, viii, p. 194; *I.A.*, i, p. 45.

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1. *I.A.*, i, p. 14 ff; *ibid.*, vii, p. 73 ff; *ibid.*, xv, p. 339 ff.

2. *Ibid.*, vii, p. 77 ff; *ibid.*, xv, p. 339 ff.

The earlier Gurjara capital was Nāndīpurī, modern Nandod, the capital of the former Rajpipla State, but later on it was shifted to Bhārukachchha.

3. Cf. *I.H.Q.*, xx, p. 358 and n. 20.

course of one of his numerous military campaigns.[1] It is quite apparent that, after the death of Pulakeśin II, the overlord of the Gurjara king of Bhārukachchha, the Maitraka ruler, seizing hold of this heaven-sent opportunity, attacked that territory and brought it under his paramount control. Majumdar has rightly remarked that "gratitude in politics is seldom of long duration." Dharasena rather ungenerously ignored the fact that his father had found shelter in the very aforesaid Gurjara kingdom when his own territories had been attacked by Harsha.[2] The Gurjara territory of Bhārukachchha, however, remained integrated to the Valabhī kingdom only for a short duration. The immediate successors of Dharasena do not appear to have ruled over that Gurjara kingdom,

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1. Cf. *I.H.Q.*, xx, p. 358.
2. It is an established fact that Dhruvasena II, father of Dharasena IV, was given protection by the Gurjara king of Bhārukachchha against the aggressive policy pursued by Emperor Harsha who wanted to annex the Valabhī Kingdom and thereby expand the territorial limits of his empire. We have already drawn the attention of scholars to the alliance of Dhruvasena II with the contemporary Gurjara king who was his neighbour. One, therefore, feels intrigued as to how his son and successor Dharasena IV went against his father's patron and protector and conquered his kingdom. There might be a number of reasons whereby we can explain his ungrateful attitude towards the Gurjara king, but to us it occurs that the reasons for Dharasena's conquest of the aforesaid Gurjara kingdom were economic rather than political. Valabhī had no outlet to the sea and, as such, the country's export trade might have suffered sufficiently for that reason for a long time. The conquest of the small kingdom of Bhārukachchha, as the Valabhī king felt, would suffiiciently improve the economic conditions by his control over a sea-port which was long known for its export trade not only with Middle East but also Celyon. It is needless to mention here the evidence that has come to our notice not only from the Sanskrit and Pāli texts but also from the *Periplus* (Ist Century A. D.). In our opinion, the weakness of the contemporary Gurjara king of Bhārukachchha coupled with the intention of improving the economic conditions of the Valabhī kingdom might have induced Dharasna IV to break off his ancestral alliance with the Gurjara king and annex his kingdom. The examples set by Harsha and Pulakesin II in respect of territorial aggrandisement do not seem to us to have been the real cause of Dharasena's ingratitude.

as there is evidence enough to prove that it had become independent and that too, shortly after the death of that powerful Maitraka monarch who had conquered it.

It appears that Dhruvasena II had gained sufficient power while ruling as a feudatory of Harsha in Western India. Besides, as the son-in-law of his suzerain, the Valabhī king must have also been held in high esteem and regard by petty chiefs ruling around and in the immediate neighbourhood of the Valabhī kingdom. During the lifetime of Harsha, however, Dhruvasena could not have gained any opportunity to assume independent sovereign status in Western India. But, since the accession of his son, Dharasena, took place only a few years before the death of Harsha, the former fully took advantage of his relationship, position and prestige of his father in furthering his policy of self-aggrandisement in the best possible manner. Perhaps it was for this reason that, in the very same year of Harsha's death (c. 646 A.D.), Dharasena II assumed the imperialistic title of *Chakravartin* with the obvious intention of proclaiming his paramountcy.[1] Jayaswal has gone to the extent of suggesting that the king 'Dha' mentioned in the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* as the successor of Harsha, is identical with Dharasena IV.[2] Some other scholars, too, hold the view that Dharasena IV, the grandson of Harsha, assumed the imperialistic titles as that Pushpabhūti emperor died without any male issue to succeed him.[3]

It is really unfortunate that definite epigraphic evidence about his other conquests is sadly lacking in the hitherto known inscriptions of the dynasty. But we shall be nearer the truth to presume, on the basis of his numerous imperialistic titles, that he extended his sovereign sway in other directions as well. That his paramountcy was never challenged during his lifetime is amply proved by the fact that none of the numerous dynasties which cropped up later claim that their ancestors, in their epigraphic records, had ever measured swords with him in an effort to question his suzerainty in

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[1] *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, x, p. 72 ff; *I.A.*, i, p. 14 ff.

[2] Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, p. 67.

[3] *Ibid.*; Ray, N., *I.H.Q.*, 1928, p. 464.

Western India. It was really unfortunate for the Maitrakas that Dharasena had a very short period of reign and had no opportunity to stabilise his gains and influence.

As there is a short gap of two years between the last known date of Dharasena IV (330) and the earliest recorded date of his successor Dhruvasena III (332), we may, therefore, reasonably conclude that the death of the former took place in or about 650 A.D.[1]

Dhruvasena III

(c. 650-655 A. D.)

Dhruvasena III, the third son of Ḍerabhaṭṭa and grandson of Śīlāditya I, succeeded to the throne of Valabhī after the death of Dharasena IV. Most probably Dharasena IV left no male issue to succeed him.[2] Thus the succession to the Valabhī throne, which had passed on to the family of Kharagraha I after the death of Śīlāditya I, was again restored to that of the latter. Dhruvasena's succession to the throne even during the lifetime of his elder brothers is really inexplicable. We are not in a position to offer any definite opinion on this curious episode. Whether he usurped the throne or came by it with the formal consent of his elder brother or brothers (if both of them were alive), is really difficult to decide for want of definite information, as both eventualities are equally possible.

Dhruvasena does not seem to have enjoyed the same prestige and glory as his illustrious predecessor and, therefore, he did not assume any imperialistic titles like the latter. It is

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1. *I.A.*, xv, p. 339; Bombay Gazetteer, i, i, p. 92.
2. Our contention receives support from the fact that a princess (Rājaduhitā) Bhūpā is mentioned as a *dūtaka* in two land-grants of Dharasena IV (*I.A.*, vii, p. 73; *ibid*, xv, p. 339). Generally, the crown-prince occupied this position in Ancient India. It, therefore, gives rise to the suspicion that the princess therein mentioned was a daughter of Dharasena. But later on, the Maitraka king must have favoured the idea of his succession by a male heir and selected his cousin, Dhruvasena, from amongst his relatives to succeed him. This is corroborated by the fact that Dhruvasena has also been mentioned as *dūtaka* in the subsequent land-grants of Dharasena IV (*I.A.*, i, pp. 14 and 45).

possible that, with the revival of the Chālukyan power during the reign of Vikramāditya I, whose fame, both as a warrior and conqueror had, by then, been firmly established, those territories which had been lost by the Chālukyas after the death of Pulakeśin II, were reconquered by the former. Thus, the Maitraka supremacy over the newly conquered territories in the West having ended, Dhruvasena had to remain content with his ancestral kingdom only. The family epigraphs do not speak of any efforts on the part of Dhruvasena to have asserted himself in quest of any fresh conquests.

Kharagraha II

(c. 655-660 A. D.)

Dhruvasena III was succeeded by his elder borther Kharagraha II. It is rather strange that the elder brother succeeded the younger; but, as stated above, it is difficult for us to give any satisfactory explanation for this curious phenomenon due to lack of any positive evidence. There are certain facts and phenomena in history for which reasons cannot easily be assigned, and this peculiarity of succession may very well be cited as an illustration. Kharagraha II, like Śīlāditya I, wore the title of *Dharmāditya.* He does not seem to have enjoyed a long reign, since it terminated in or about the year 660 A. D.

Śīlāditya III

(c. 660-685/690 A. D.)

Kharagraha II was succeeded by Śīlāditya III. He was a son of Śīlāditya II, the eldest son of Ḍerabhaṭṭa.[1] It seems probable that Śīlāditya II could not ascend the throne as his death had taken place before c. 660 A. D. Thus, after the death of Kharagraha II, who had no male issue, Śīlāditya III, who was the next in the line of succession, naturally ascended the throne.[2]

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[1] See Fleet, *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 185, n. 3.

[2] Śīlāditya II did not actually reign but he is referred to in an inscription as "the lord of the earth, the bulky breasts of which are the Vindhyā mountains of dark blue colour" (*C.I.I.*, iii, p. 185). We may perhaps reasonably conclude from this that he had possibly been conne-

Śīlāditya III was the second most powerful king of the Valabhī House after Dharasena IV. Like his uncle, he also assumed the imperialistic titles *Paramabhaṭṭāraka*, *Mahārājādhirāja*, and *Parameśvara*.[1] He appears to have annexed the neighbouring Gurjara kingdom of Bhārukachchha, since he made a land grant in that territory in favour of a Brāhmaṇa who had emigrated from Girinagara in Saurāshṭra.[2] That the Gurjaras had suffered reverses during this period is clearly indicated from their records. Fortunately for Śīlāditya, the overlord of the Gurjaras, the mighty Chālukyan emperor Vikramāditya I, was also seriously engaged during this period in a long drawn-out war to crush the power of the Pallavas and Choḷas in the Deccan. Evidently therefore, he could not render any help to his Gurjara feudatory in maintaining his authority.

But this occupation of the Gurjara territory by the Maitrakas was, again, for a very short period. According to the Nasik Plates dated in 685 A. D., Dharāśraya-Jayasiṁha, son of Pulakeśin II, defeated and exterminated the whole army of Vajjaḍa "with a multitude of bright-tipped arrows in the country between the Mahī and the Narmadā."[3] This Vajjaḍa of the aforesaid Chālukyan record has generally been identified with Vajraṭa who has been mentioned in several Rāshṭrakūṭa records as having been defeated like Harsha by the Chālukyas.[4] The fact that the name of Vajraṭa has been mentioned along with that of Harsha shows that he must have been a powerful king of note. The place where the battle in question was fought and Vajjaḍa was defeated lay in the territory of the Gurjaras who were then feudatories of the Chālukyas. It, therefore, appears that when Vajjaḍa invaded

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cted with the administration of that region, like his father, during the reign of some of his predecessors.

[1] *C.I.I.*, iii, p. 185.

[2] Garde, *Important Inscriptions from the Baroda State*, i, p. 18 ff; *Arch. Sur. Rep., West. Cir.*, 1915-16, p. 55.

[3] Khare, G.H., *Sources of the Mediaeval History of the Deccan*, i, p. 8 ff.

[4] *E.I.*, vi, pp. 210-12.
Cf. Mirashi, *I.H.Q.*, xx, p. 353; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 149.

and occupied Gurjara kingdom, the contemporary Chālukyan ruler came to their help and successfully expelled the army of Vajjaḍa from their territories. After taking a careful stock of the existing political conditions and the situation of the locality involved in particular, it seems very probable that Vajjaḍa was the same as Śīlāditya III of the Maitraka dynasty, who had invaded the Gurjara kingdom and occupied their capital, as mentioned above. No other powerful ruler is known to have flourished in those regions during the period under discussion. It is certainly true that, that Maitraka ruler has never been mentioned by that name in the records of his family; but we must also remember that, after Śīlāditya II, all the known rulers of the family bore the same name. It, therefore, seems, as Mirashi suggests, that "Śīlāditya became the conventional name of all kings of Valabhī. As in the case of the Daddas and Jayabhaṭas of the Gurjara dynasty, they must have had other personal names by which they were distinguished from one another."[1] If, as very well suggested by that learned scholar, Śīlāditya was merely a 'conventional name', we have to look for a proper name for him. Now a victor king or general would not name his defeated adversary by his '*Āditya*' appellation—rather he would signify the insult of defeat by using his proper name, bereft of epithets. Since Śīlāditya is the only known ruler in Western India who waged war against the Gurjaras and occupied their capital, Dharāśraya Jayasiṁha could have defeated him only. All this conclusively proves that Vajjaḍa was none else but Śīlāditya III. In all probability, Śīlāditya was expelled from the Gurjara kingdom some time in between 677 and 685 A.D. by the contemporary Gurjara king Dadda III with the help he had received from his liege-lord, the Chālukyan monarch, Vikramāditya I.

Another event worthy of note during the reign of Śīlāditya III was an unsuccessful raid made by the Arabs somewhere on the coastal regions of his territory. Ismail, the Arab invader, who was responsible for that raid, is said to have landed at Gogha, an insignificant sea-port, in the Gulf of

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[1] *I.H.Q.*, xx, p. 359; Cf. Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 149.

Cambay with his followers in 57 A.H. (677 A.D.).[1] No detailed account of that raid is available to us so far; but there can hardly be any doubt that the invaders were successfully dealt with and repulsed by that powerful Valabhī king. No political significance can be attached to such sporadic raids of the Arabs on the coastal regions of Western India which were for the sole purpose of plundering the prosperous port-town or towns situated on or nearby the sea.

A study of the land-grants of Śīlāditya III reveals the fact that he was occupied in incessant warfare for the greater part of his reign. Three of his landgrant charters dated between 669 and 675 A.D. were issued from his victorious camps at Kheṭaka, Meghavana and Pichchhipajīvasak respectively, while the one issued in 676-77 A.D. indicates his conquest of the Gurjara territory.[2] Although the Chālukyas came out victorious in their struggle for political supremacy with the Choḷas and Pallavas in the South, they were unable to conquer any part of the adjacent Valabhī kingdom. We, therefore, have no hesitation in admitting that Śīlāditya III ranks as the second most powerful king of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhī.

Śīlāditya IV

(c. 685/690-710/15 A.D.)

Śīlāditya III was succeeded by his son who also styled himself as Śīlāditya (IV).[3] Like his predecessor, he also assumed imperialistic titles of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka*, *Mahārājādhirāja* and *Parameśvara*, which clearly indicate that he successfully maintained the power and prestige of his family in Western

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1. Muhamad Safiullah, *Mirate Mustafabad*, ii, p. 495; Forbes *Sabhā Traimāsika*, iii, pp. 25-6.
2. *E.I.*, iv, p. 74; *I.A.*, xi, p. 305; Diskalkar, D.B., *Inscriptions of Kathiawad*, p. 57.
3. In the land-grants of Śīlāditya III, Prince Dhruvasena is mentioned as *dūtaka*. Since this office was the privilege of the heir-apparent, we may rightly presume that the name of Śīlāditya II was Dhruvasena, but after accession to the throne, he styled himself as 'Śīlāditya' like his father. This practice, as we know, was also adopted by his successors till the last member of the line.

India.[1] During his reign the Chālukyan monarchs Vijayāditya and Vinayāditya, though enjoying paramountcy in the Deccan, did not dare invade any part of the Valabhī kingdom very probably because of their campaigns in Northern India, particularly in the Ganges valley, which had ended in failure.[2] This fact might have helped Śīlāditya IV to a great extent in maintaining his political supremacy over Western India without any contest and interference.

Śīlāditya IV was succeeded by his son, who also, according to the customary practice of the family, is known to us as Sīlāditya V. The Maitrakas continued to rule over their territories in Western India with many a fluctuation in their fortunes but with undiminished glory till the closing quarter of the 8th century A.D. Their subsequent history, however, is beyond the scope of our investigation for the present.

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1. *I.A.*, v, p. 208.
2. परैः पलायमानैरासाद्य कथमपि विधिवशादपनीतोऽपि प्रतापादेव विषयप्रकोपमराजकमुत्सर्पन् वत्सराज इवानपेक्षितापर साहायकस्तदवग्रहन्निर्गत्य...॥ *Ibid.*, ix, pp. 127-8; Cf. Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, p. 368; Majumdar, *Classical Age*, p. 246.

CHAPTER IX

THE PRATĪHĀRAS OF GURJARADEŚA

Theories Relating to the Origin of the Gurjaras and their Early Settlements

The Gurjaras came into prominence about the second half of the sixth century A.D.[1] They, no doubt, took advantage of the collapse of the mighty empire of Yaśodharman immediately after his death, and set up a principality of their own on the verge of its ruins. Subsequently, as history shows, other Gurjara principalities emerged in the very same manner in different parts of Western India.

The appearance of the Gurjaras on the political arena of Indian history has become a subject of keen controversy among scholars. Some of them believe that the Gurjaras were a foreign people who came to India along with the Hūṇas, while others maintain that 'Gurjara' was once the name of a country, the inhabitants of which were known as the Gurjaras. There are thus two sets of opinions which have gained ground in history; and much can be said, both for and against, on either of them. Scholars who believe that the Gurjaras had migrated to India, consider them to be a section of the Hūṇas, who had come to this country and settled near Jodhpur in the State of Rajasthan.[2] That particular locality, where they had settled for the first time, came to be known as '*Gurjaratrā*, otherwise known as '*Gurjarabhūmi*'.[3] The name '*Gurjaratrā*' is highly significant. It suggests that it

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1. The inscriptions give variants of the name '*Gurjara*', e. g., *Gūrjara, Gurjjara, Gūrjjara*, etc.
2. Campbell, J. M., *Bombay Gazetteer*, ix, App. B; Bühler, *I. A.*, xvii, p. 192; Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1909, p. 54; *E. H. I.*, pp. 340, 428, n. 2; Cunningham, *A. S. R.*, ii, p. 61; Bhandarkar, D. R., *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, xxi, p. 411 ff; Jackson, A. M. T., *Bombay Gazetteer*, i, i, p. 113; Baines, *Ethnography*, p. 44; Tripathi, R. S., *History of Kanauj*, p. 221.
3. Jodhpur Inscription of Bāuka, *J. R. A. S.*, 1894, p. 4; *E. I.*, xviii, p. 95 ff; Ghatiyala Inscription No. 1 of Kakkuka, *E. I.*, ix, p. 279 ff, v. 3.

was in that locality that the Gurjaras had gained a footing and originally settled. It, therefore, came to be known after them, just as the localities where the Śakas, the Ābhīras and the Mālavas had settled, came to be called Śakadvīpa, Ābhīravarta (Ahirawara), and Mālava respectively.[1] The view that the Gurjaras were foreigners has been questioned by those scholars who take the word 'Gurjara' to be primarily the name of an extensive region which was inhabited by that tribe.[2] This opinion, however, has not been accepted by other scholars who maintain that the different areas, which came to be occupied by the Gurjaras for the purpose of settlement, when they had migrated to this country, came to be associated with the name of their tribe. The various place-names to which the name 'Gurjara' is prefixed, as for instance, Gurjranwala, Gujarkhan and Gujarat, in their opinion, bear clear testimony to this fact [3]

The origin of the Gurjara royal families is, as yet, a matter of controversy. Several theories have been started by scholars, but they have failed to arrive at a definite conclusion so far. Cunningham identifies them with Tochari, *alias* Yue-chi, alias the Kushāṇas.[4] Nesfield regards them to be cattle-grazers (from Skt. *gochara*) and consequently not of an alien stock.[5] Many ethnologists are of opinion that the Ahirs, the Gujars and the Jats are of the same stock, who had migrated to this country at different periods and settled in different parts of Western India.[1] Bhandarkar maintains that they were of Scythian and not of Aryan origin.[2] According to Smith, "The early Gurjaras seem to have been foreign immigrants, closely associated with, and possibly allied in blood to, the White Huns."[3] In the opinion of Jackson, the Gurjaras were of foreign origin and were the same as the Khazars, a section of the Hūṇas.[4] There are other scholars who also believe that, ethnically, the Gurjaras were of some foreign stock, who had migrated to this country in some unknown period of Indian history, like so many other communities, known or unknown. This view, however, has not found acceptance at the hands of some Indian scholars who consider that tribe to be purely an indigenous one. In our opinion, the Gurjaras, like the Ābhīras and the Jaṭṭas (Jats), were a section of some ancient tribe which inhabited some part of the Punjab or Sindh or perhaps of Western Rajputana. Literary evidence tends to show that many tribes occupying the basin of the Punjab rivers and the Indus were inter-related as, for instance, the Auśīnaras and the Śivis, the latter being a section of the former, though of somewhat later origin. Similar relationship existed between the Kshudrakas and the Mālavas, as evidenced by Pāṇini and even by the historians of Alexander the Great. This fragmentation of ancient tribes is a special feature of the tribal history of Ancient India. There are, however, certain facts relating to the original settlement of the Gurjaras, which we would like to bring to the notice of the historians for their consideration.

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[1] Cf. Bhandarkar, D. R., *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, xxi, p. 415.

[2] Vaidya, *H. M. H. I.*, i, pp. 253–4; *ibid.*, ii, p. 32 ff; Ojha, G. H., *History of Rajputana*, i, p. 155 ff; Munshi, K. M., *Glory that was Gūrjaradeśa*, pp. 1–5, 173 ff; Ganguly, D. C., *I. H. Q.*, x, 337, 613; Sharma, D., *I. C.*, iv, p. 113 ff; see also *I.H.Q.*, xi, p. 167; *ibid.*, p. 584, *ibid.*, xiii, p. 137; *I. C.*, i, p. 515; *J. B. O. R. S.*, xxiv, p. 221; *J. D. L.*, x, p. 1 ff; Iyengar, K., quoted in *J. D. L.*, x, p. 3.

[3] During the eighteenth century, the district of Saharanpur was also called Gujarat and a northern district of Gwalior is still called Gujargarh.

[4] *A. S. R.*, ii, p. 70.

[5] Nesfield, J. S., *Brief View of the Caste System of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, p. 12.

Gurjarabhūmi: the Land of the Gurjaras

The frequent occurrence of the names 'Gurjaratrā' and 'Gurjaratrābhūmi' in certain inscriptions of the 9th and the 10th cent. A.D., is important from the historical point of view.[5] The question that confronts us here is: what is the

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1. Ibbetson, *Census of the Punjab*, p. 265.
2. Bhandarkar, D. R., *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, xxi, p. 432.
3. *E. H. I.*, p. 340; see also p. 428, n. 2.
4. *Bombay Gazetteer*, i, i, p. 113.
5. Jodhpur Inscription of Bāuka, *E. I.*, xviii, p. 95 ff; *J. R. A. S.*, 1894, p. 4; Ghatiyala Inscription No. 1 of Kakkuka, *E. I.*, ix, p. 279 ff, v. 3;

real significance of these two place-names which, though identical in sense, are slightly different in form ? According to Pāṇini's aphorism, *deye trā cha*, the suffix *trā* may be added after the name of the donee, to indicate a particular plot of land which he has received as a gift.[1] The exposition on the same *Taddhita sūtra* as given in the *Kāśikā*, further suggests that the suffix *trā* should be added after the name of the recipient, not merely to indicate the gift of land to him, but also his full authority over the same. Thus, the word *Brāhmaṇatrā* would mean a plot of land donated to a Brāhmaṇa and, at the same time, would suggest his absolute right over the same, which under no circumstances could be nullified.[2] On the analogy of the same, the word *Gurjaratrā* would mean a plot of land, whether big or small, which had been given to the Gurjaras and over which they enjoyed the right of full ownership which was inviolable. If this be the significance of the *Taddhita* suffix *trā*, when added after a name, we have no other alternative but to admit that, in some unknown period of history, the Gurjaras had received an area for settlement, obviously from some ruler of Western India. What is actually signified by the term *Gurjaratrā*, is also evident from the other names such as *Gurjaratrābhūmi*, *Gurjaratrāmaṇḍala*, *Gurjaradeśa*, *Gurjarabhūmi* and *Gurjaramaṇḍala*, all of which imply the land assigned to the Gurjaras, evidently for their settlement.[3] It

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Gwalior Inscription of Bhoja, *ibid.*, xviii, p. 107 ff; Daulatpur Inscription of Bhoja, *ibid.*, v, p. 211 ff.

[1] V, 4, 55. I am extremely obliged and grateful to my Guru, Prof. C. D. Chatterjee, for this reference.

[2] तदधीनवचनइत्यनुवर्त्तते । तस्य विशेषणं देयग्रहणम् । दातव्यं, देयं, तदधीने देये त्रा प्रत्ययो भवति चकारात्सातिश्च कृभ्वस्तिभिः सम्पदा च योगे । ब्राह्मणेभ्यो देयमितियद्विज्ञातं तद्-यदा तेषां समर्पणेन तदधीनं क्रियते तदा त्रा प्रत्ययः । ब्राह्मणाधीनं देयं करोति ब्राह्मणसात्करोति । ब्राह्मणत्रा करोति । ब्राह्मणत्रा भवति । ब्राह्मणत्रा स्यात् । ब्राह्मणत्रा संपद्यते । देय इति किम् । राजसाद्भवति राष्ट्रम् । (V. 4. 55).

[3] *E. I.*, xviii, p. 107 ff; *ibid.*, v, p. 211 ff; Cunningham, *A. S. R.*, xxi, p. ix; Ragholi Plates of Jayavardhana II, *E. I.*, ix, p. 44 ff; Sanjan Copper-plate Inscription of Amoghavarsha, *ibid.*, xviii, p.243, v. 9; *Pañchatantra*, iv, 9; Udyotana, *Kuvalayamālā*, quoted in *Apabhraṁśa Kāvyatrayī* (G. I. C.), xxxii, p. 93; Chandrasūri, *Munisuvratasvāmicharita*, Peterson Report, v, 80; Somaprabha, *Kumārapālapratibodha* (G. O. C.), xiv, v. 3; Pūrṇa-

may be noted here, that all these names have been found to occur in the inscriptions of the 9th and the 10th cent. A.D. in the history of which the Gurjaras predominated. The use of the suffix *trā* after the name 'Gurjara', however, does not throw any light on the question of the indigenous or foreign origin of that tribe. We can only say that the Pratīhāra kings, when they described themselves as Gurjara-Pratīhāra, considered the *Gurjaratrābhūmi* to have been their ancestral home and nothing beyond that.[1]

The Indigenous Origin of the Gurjaras

The country of the Gurjaras has been referred to in the *Āgni Purāṇa* as forming a part of the Uttarāpatha (Northern India).[2] As regards the date of that work, it may definitely be said to have been written in the early Gupta period when most of the important *Purāṇas* were either composed or substantially recast.[3] The Gurjara as a community, however, has found mention in certain other works which definitely belong to the pre-Harsha period, but there is at least one amongst them, the antiquity of which may mount as high as the second half of the fifth century A. D. The work in question is the *Yogavāsishṭha* which has pointedly referred to the Gurjara men and women.[4] The Gurjaras have also been men-

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bhadra, *Maharshi-charita-praśasti*, *Catalogue of Palm Leaf Mss. in the Bhāṇḍārs at Jesalmere* (G. O. C.); Dohad Inscription, *I. A.*, x, p. 159.

Majumdar is of opinion that *Gurjaratrā* is a variant of Gujarat. The province, now known as Gujarat was not called by that name till a much later period (*Classical Age*, pp. 63–4).

[1] Rajor Inscription of Mathanadeva, *E. I.*, iii, p. 266.

[2] सैन्धवा यामुनाश्चैव गुर्जरा भोज वाह्लिकाः ।
जालंधरं च काश्मीरं सप्तमश्चोत्तरापथम् ।। —130.7.

[3] Of the eighteen main *Purāṇas*, only seven throw light on the extent of the Gupta Empire as it probably was during the reign of Chandragupta I, and *Agni Purāṇa* is one of them. The presumption, therefore, arises that, like the other *Purāṇas*, which mention the royal family of the Guptas and describe the extent of the Gupta Empire, it was also composed in the early Gupta period.

[4] गुर्ज्जरानीकनाशेन गुर्जरी केशलुञ्चनम् । विहितं तङ्गणोत्तुङ्गनासिशङ्कुशतैरणे ।। —*Utpatti*. 37.19.

tioned in the *Mahābhārata* which, like the *Purāṇas*, has been substantially enlarged in the Gupta period.[1] It is an admitted fact that the epics like the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* and at least the seven more important *Purāṇas* had taken their present form long before the beginning of the sixth century A. D. That the *Mahābhārata*, like the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Bṛihatkathā* of Guṇāḍhya, had already taken its present form and was widely read in the days of Bāṇa, is evident from the *Kādambarī*. But the earliest of all the aforesaid works is undoubtedly the *Yogavāsishṭha* of unknown authorship, the importance and popularity of which has been attested by the fact that towards the beginning of the ninth century A. D., Gauḍa Abhinanda prepared a summary of it under the name *Yogavāsishṭha-sāra*.[2] Thus, the earliest Sanskrit text which has referred to the Gurjaras is the *Yogavāsishṭha* which, from the point of view of antiquity, is the oldest of all the texts that have referred to that tribe or to the land of its settlement.

The light that has been thrown on the history of the Gurjaras by the *Yogavāsishṭha*, clearly tends to show that that particular community existed long before the time of its author. We have, therefore, no hesitation to admit that it was in existence at least during the second half of the fourth century A. D. If they had existed even earlier, we have at least no authoritative or authentic piece of evidence to rely on, although we do not deny that it is not only probable, but also possible. That the members of the Gurjara community were professional warriors, like the Yaudheyas, is also apparent from the very same work. In view of these hard facts, it is extremely difficult for us to admit that the Gurjaras were merely a section of the Hūṇas, as suggested by the aforesaid historians. The Ephthalite or White Hūṇas, crossed the western frontiers of India, as it appears, in c. 450 A. D., and if the Gurjaras were already settled in some part of Western India about that time, we certainly cannot consider them to be ethnically related to that Mongoloid tribe. Admitting for the time being that the Gurjaras were of Hūṇic origin, it is preposterous to suppose that they entered India and settled somewhere in the Punjab or Rajasthan at least half a century before the white Hūṇas made their appearance on the North-West frontiers of India. We, therefore, consider the Gurjaras to be of purely Indian origin as being a section of some indigenous tribe inhabiting some region in the Punjab or Rajasthan. It is evident from the grammatical work of Pāṇini, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Purāṇas* and the writings of Alexander's historians that there were many tribes inhabiting the basin of the Punjab rivers and the Indus which were of Indian origin; and there can be no wonder that, like the Śivis, the Gurjaras had also branched off from their parental stock, the identity of which is so far unknown to us. Such compounds as *Gurjaradeśa*, *Gurjarabhūmi* and *Gurjara-maṇḍala* obviously have been formed on the basis of the name of the Gurjara tribe, and there can be no difference of opinion about it. We have, thus, cogent reasons to believe that the Gurjaras were in India long before the time of the author of *Yogavāsishṭha*, who has made a pointed reference to their skill in warfare. In our opinion, the Gurjaras and the Ābhīras, who were so frequently associated as being peoples of the same ethnic type, had come into existence sometime before the beginning of the Christian era. While the Gurjaras established themselves in the so-called Gurjaratrābhūmi, the Ābhīras, who had also separated like the former from some other tribe, settled somewhere in the coastal regions of Gujarat, which has been called Abiria in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (Ist cent. A. D.).[1] Regarding the location of the *Gurjaratrā* or *Gurjaratrābhūmi*, the opinion that has gained ground is that it lay between Didwana, Siwa and Maglona in modern Rajasthan.[2]

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[1] वर्बरा यवनाश्चैव गुर्जराभीरकास्तथा ।
पल्लवाः शककारूशास्तुम्ब्रराः काशिकास्तथा ॥

—*Sabhā Parva*, 48.20.

[2] Keith, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 480.

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[1] Schoff, W. H., (tr.), pp. 39–175.

[2] *E. I.*, ix, p. 280.

Ganguly is of opinion that *Gurjaratrābhūmi* extended at least from Didwana in the Jodhpur State, in the West, to Rajor in the East, comprising the western part of Jodhpur State, and the whole of the States of Jaipur and Alwar (*I. H. Q.*, x, p. 338). Dasharatha Sharma, however, refutes the opinion of Ganguly as he considers the boundary of

A relevant question that may be asked here is : if the Gurjaras had emerged as a separate tribe prior to the fifth century A. D., why had they remained unnoticed in literature and inscriptions belonging to the first four centuries of the Christian era ? An answer to this question is not far enough to seek. Many tribes flourishing in the Kushāṇa and even in the early Gupta period are as yet unknown to us, because they had not played any prominent part in history. For instance, we would not have been able to know anything about the Prārjunas, the Kākas and the Kharaparikas, if Samudragupta had not come in contact with them and had forced them to tender submission to him.[1] (Likewise, we had no knowledge of the Vāhlikas till the publication of that solitary inscription which has referred to them as a tribe[2]). It is a fact that the list of the tribes, whether of the East or of the West, which is available to us from different sources, both literary and epigraphic, is as yet incomplete and it is expected that many new tribes will come to the notice of historians with the discovery of the documents relating to them in due course. Occasionally, a new tribe suddenly comes to our notice even with the discovery of coins. As an illustration, it may be mentioned here that we had no information about the Maghas, till the coins of their rulers, though very few in number, were discovered in the Jamuna valley. Thus, if the Gurjaras had remained unnoticed till the beginning of the fifth century A.D., it is because of their political insignificance which stood in the way of their coming into prominence. In this connection, we must also not overlook the fact that emerging and merging are

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Gurjarabhūmi as given by the latter to be "too wide and too narrow". According to him, it should include the south-western portions of the former Jodhpur State and a part of modern Gujarat. "That south-western portion of the former Jodhpur State should be included in any and every description of Gurjaratrā is obvious from Hsuan Chuang's statement that Bhilmal or Bhinmal, at present a town in that quarter of the state, was the capital of Ku-che-lo or Gurjara country as identified by Cunningham–*Ancient Geography of India*, p. 312" (*I. C.*, iv, pp. 114–5).

[1] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, iii, p. 6.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 141.

also some of the characteristic features of the tribal history of Ancient India. Tribes like the Kathaioi (Kaṭhas), the Glausai or Glaukanikoi (Glauchukāyanakas), the Agalassoi, the Xathroi (Kshattras ?) and the Ossadioi (Vasātis), which have been mentioned by the Greek writers, have totally disappeared through merging with more important tribes. To what extent the merging of the tribes for the purpose of offering resistance and their movements from place to place were due to the aggressive policy of the foreign invaders, is a question which should receive treatment at abler hands.[1]

The Earlier Pratīhāra Family and its Branches

We have seen above that the Gurjara tribe was in existence in Western India long before the Hūṇas crossed the Indian frontiers from Afghanistan. It has also been suggested by us that, like the Ābhīras, the Gurjaras, too, emerged from some ancient tribe which was settled somewhere in the Punjab or Rajasthan and that their separation took place sometime during the first four centuries of the Christian era. Regarding the locality where the members of the Gurjara tribe had first settled, after they had separated from their parental stock, we have mentioned above that it was *Gurjaratrā* or *Gurjaratrābhūmi*, the land which they had received for the purpose of settlement between Didwana, Siwa and Maglona in modern Rajasthan. From which king of which particular dynasty that land grant had come to them, history has not cared to record.

Epigraphic evidence tends to show that during the 7th century A. D., there were two distinct royal families which can definitely claim connection with *Gurjaratrābhūmi*, the home of the Gurjaras. They are, (a) the Pratīhāras of Māṇḍavyapura (Mandor) and (b) the Gurjaras (Pratīhāras) of Nāndīpurī (Nandeval). There was yet another family which could justly claim connection with *Gurjaratrābhūmi*, viz., Pratīhāras of Bhillamāla, but its origin had taken place sometime in the

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[1] The settlements of the Gurjaras in different parts of the Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat, the migration of the Mālavas from the Punjab to Uttar Pradesh and later on to Rajasthan are typical examples of the mass migration of the tribes.

8th century A. D., and is, thus, beyond our scope of treatment.[1] The inscriptions relating to the first two dynasties mentioned above, contain certain expressions denoting not only the names of the royal families to which the rulers of *Gurjaratrābhūmi* belonged, but also their common nationality. These appellations, though not of frequent occurrence in the epigraphic records, are highly significant at least from the historical point of view. The designations in question are the following :

(1) *Pratīhāra-vaṁśa*, (2) *Gurjaranṛipativaṁśa* and (3) *Gurjara-Pratīhāra.*[2] In addition to the above, in certain records of the non-Gurjara royal families like the Rāshṭrakūṭas, the Chedis and the Chālukyas, we also come across the following : (4) *Gurjareśvara*, (5) *Gurjaranātha*, (6) *Gurjareśvarapati* and (7) *Gurjara.*[3] From the foregoing list of appellations referring to the rulers, whether of the main Pratīhāra family of Māṇḍavyapura or to those belonging to its well-known branches mentioned above, it is apparent that they fall in three distinct categories. They are as follows: (a) name of the ruling family: (1), (b) name of the ruling family, compounded with that of its nationality: (3), (c) nationality of the ruling family: (2) and (d) name of the nationality of the rulers: (4), (5), (6) and (7). The epigraphic records in which the aforesaid terms have been found to occur enable us to connect the Bhillamāla house of the Pratīhāras with that of Māṇḍavyapura without any shade of doubt, because the former has also come to be designated as 'Pratīhāra'.[4] Again, it is evident from the royal charters issued by the rulers of the above mentioned Nāndīpurī

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[1] Cf. Jodhpur Inscription of Pratīhāra Bāuka, *E.I.*, xviii, p. 95 ff, v. 4; *J. R.A.S.*, 1894, p.4ff, v.4; Gwalior Praśasti of Bhoja, *E.I*, xviii, pp.107-14.
स्वभ्राता रानभद्रस्य प्रतिहार्यं कृतं यतः श्री प्रतिहार्यम्सोऽथं अतश्चोन्नतिमाप्नुयात् ।
—v. 3–4.

[2] *Pratīhāravaṁśa* : *E. I.*, ix, p. 279; *Gurjaranripativaṁśa* : *I. A.*, xvii, p. 194; *Gurjara-Pratīhāra* : *E. I.*, iii, p. 263.

[3] *Gurjareśvara* : *I. A.*, xii, p. 160; *Gurjaranātha* : *E. I.*, ii, p. 161 ff; *J. A. S. B.*, xliii, p. 356 ff; *Gurjareśvarapati* : *I. A.*, xii, p. 160; *Gurjara* : *E. I.*, iv, p. 287 ff; *Bombay Gazetteer*, i, i, p. 128, n. 4; *E. I.*, i, p. 126; *ibid.*, xi, p. 142; *Gurjararāja* : *Bombay Gazetteer*, i, i, p. 465-69.

[4] Cf. *ibid.*; *E.I.*, iii, p. 263.

house that they claim descent from Dadda, who is undoubtedly one of the four sons of Harichandra, of that name[1]. Thus, there can be no doubt that like the Pratīhāras of Bhillamāla, the kings belonging to the line of Dadda were also Pratīhāras. It is obvious, therefore, that the rulers who claimed connection with *Gurjaratrābhūmi*, were all of *Prathīhāranṛipativaṁśa*, whether they specifically mention it in their inscriptions or not. In this connection, it may be pointed out here that the term Gurjara-Pratīhāra signifying the Imperial Pratīhāra dynasty, has been found to occur in a Rāshṭrakūṭa inscription belonging to the second half of the 10th Cent. A. D. This term, however, is of rare occurrence and only one specific instance of it has come to our notice so far. It appears to have been used for the sake of preciseness, since the rulers belonging to the line of Nāgabhaṭa I, were not only exercising paramountcy over the whole of the Gurjaradeśa, but were perhaps believed, during the period in question, to belong to the Gurjara community. The latter view presumably gained ground, because of the intimate connection of the Pratīhāra royal family with *Gurjaratrābhūmi*, which was not only their ancestral home but also the home-land of the Gurjara tribe. Whatever be the form of designation occurring in the epigraphic records referring to them, in the eyes of a historian all of them were of *Brāhmaṇa* descent and not of tribal origin as belonging to the Gurjara stock.

It must be admitted that there has been some confusion in respect of the caste of the different Pratīhāra ruling families for which, to a certain extent, the rulers belonging to them were responsible. The Pratīhāra monarchs had apparently overlooked the fact that from the stand-point of the Hindu law, they were all Brāhmaṇas by caste even though they had descended from Rajjila or any one of his uterine brothers who were born of the Kshatriya wife of Harichandra.[2] Thus,

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1. Cf. *I. A.*, xvii, p. 194.
This point has been fully discussed in connection with the history of the Gurjaras of Nāndīpurī (see below).
2. माता भस्त्रा पितुः पुत्रो येन जातः स एव सः : *Vishṇu P.*, iv, 10, 12. Cf. *Arthaśāstra*, iii, vii (I owe this reference to Prof. C. D. Chatterjee. See *B. C. Law*

neither could they be associated with the Gurjara tribe which was undoubtedly of some non-Brahmin caste nor with the line of Lakshmaṇa who was born in the solar race of the Kshatriyas. The Kshatriya descent claimed by the Pratīhāra rulers, is evidently through the *Kshatriya* wife of the Brāhmaṇa Harichandra, but the society to which they belonged is patriarchal and not matriarchal.[1] It is not only the origin of the Pratīhāra family alone, but that of the other dynasties too, that much confusion is in evidence for which, in our opinion, the royal panegyrists and bards were primarily responsible. In this connection, we must not overlook the fact that, according to the bardic tradition current in Rajasthan, the Pratīhāras or Parihāras belonged to the *Agni-kula*, that is to say, claimed Agni as the progenitor (*Ādipurusha*) of their family.[2] It is a fact that one of the many problems that confronts the historian is the caste of the different ruling families of Ancient India, like the one under discussion.[3]

Volume, i, p. 603, no. 27). According to Yājñavalkya the descendants of Harichandra by his Kshatriya wife would be *Mūrdhābhishiktas* and not Gurjaras (IV, XCI). *Mitāksharā* supports the same view.

[1] Cf. *E. I.*, xviii, p. 95; *ibid*, ix, p. 277 ff.

[2] Tod mentions a tradition with regard to the origin of these *Agnikulas*. When the sages were harassad by demons they prayed to Mahādeva for help. The latter granted their prayer. And so from the fire-pit came out first the Pratīhāras, next the Chālukyas, then the Paramāras and lastly the Chāhamānas (*Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, i, pp. 88-9)

From the above mentioned tradition D.R. Bhandarkar coucludes that as the ancestors of Pratīhāras, Chālukyas, Paramāras and Chāhamānas all issued forth from *Agni-kuṇḍa*, it is plain that they have a common origin and hence they belong to one and the same race (*J. B. B. R. A. S.*, xxi, p. 428).

The source of the *Agni-kuṇḍa* legend can be traced to *Pṛithvīrāja Rāso* of Chand Bardai.

[3] From what we have stated above, it will be seen that there is much confusion in respect of the family and ancestry of the Pratīhāra rulers. We would like, therefore, to place our view-points here for the consideration of scholars interested in the subject. In respect of them, our opinion is as follows : (1) Owing to the pressure of foreign invasions or for some other cause, the Gurjaras migrated from their original home and settled in Rajasthan. (2) In Rajasthan proper they were

Early History of the Pratīhāra Family of Māṇḍavyapura

The earliest Pratīhāra principality, known to us so far, is the one founded by Rajjila, eldest son of Harichandra, in

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offered a place of settlement by some generous ruler, whose name is now totally lost in oblivion. (3) The land which the Gurjaras had received as gift came to be known as *Gurjaratrā* ('gift to the Gurjaras') and also as the *Gurjaratrābhūmi* ('land donated to the Gurjaras'). The use of the suffix *trā* after the name of the Gurjara clearly reveals this interesting historical fact. (4) The family of the Brahman Harichandra belonged to the *Gurjaratrābhūmi* and when his son Rajjila, born of his Kshatriya wife, carved out a principality for himself and continued to exercise political authority over the Gurjaras as also over *Gurjaradeśa* or *Gurjratrābhūmi,* the family came to be styled *Gurjareśvara, Gurjaranātha* and *Gurjareśvarapati.* Even this royal family came to be popularly known as *Gurjaranṛipativaṁśa.* The term *Pratīhāra* came to be applied to or adopted by the descendants of Rajjila several generations after him, obviously for the purpose of raising the dignity of their family by tracing the descent from Lakshmaṇa, the *Pratīhāra* of Rāma, and thereby connecting them with the solar race (*Sūryavaṁśa*). This was done apparently in imitation of what was actually done by the local contemporary powers which also trace connection with the Sun, Moon or Fire. Certainly the Brāhmaṇa Harichandra, by no stretch of imagination, can be considered to be a descendant of Lakshmaṇa, brother of Rāma, the mythical king of Ayodhya, who belonged to the solar race. (5) The term *Pratīhāra* was for the first time adopted by Bāuka, who was tenth in descent from Rajjila, son of the Brāhmaṇa Harichandra, and founder of the Pratīhāra dynasty of Māṇḍavyapura. It also came to be adopted by the Pratīhāras of Bhillamāla and Kānyakubja by way of heritage, being the name of the family to which they actually belonged. (6) The epithet *Gurjara-Pratīhāra* which occurs once only in a Rāshṭrakūṭa inscription, signifies the Pratīhāra royal family of *Gurjaradeśa.* The word *Gurjara,* when it is compounded with the word *Pratīhāra,* in our opinion, indicates the Pratīhāra royal family of *Gurjaradeśa* and not the Pratīhāra royal family of Gurjara extraction. This is apparently in view of the fact that the descendants of Rajjila had a Brāhmaṇa as their progenitor and had, thus, nothing in common with the members of the Gurjara tribe, whatever be their caste. (7) To which caste the Gurjaras belonged, is as yet unknown to us. Our information relating to the caste of many such tribes is next to nothing for paucity of evidence. (8) As stated above, the main line of the Pratīhāras was that of Māṇḍavyapura (Mandor). The Pratīhāra dynasty of Nāndīpurī and that of Bhillamāla and later on of Kānyakubja were its branches.

the former Jodhpur State in Rajputana, towards the middle of the sixth century A.D.[1] As for Harichandra, it is stated in the Jodhpur Inscription of Bāuka that he was a Brāhmaṇa and was of Pratīhāra lineage.[2] He was well-versed in the Vedas and the Śāstras.[3] In the Ghatiyala Inscription of Kakkuka, he has been described as the 'venerable ancestor' of the Pratīhāra family (*pratīhāravaṁśaguru*), which implies, in our opinion, that he was believed by the rulers belonging to that line to have been its founder (*Ādipurusha*).[4] The name of

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1. The information that follows is based mainly on the Jodhpur Inscription of Pratīhāra Bāuka (*E.I.*, xviii, p. 87 ff). See also *J.D.L.*, x, p. 1 ff.

2. *E.I.*, xviii, p. 95 ff.

   It is further stated in the aforesaid Jodhpur Inscription (894 V.S.) that the sons of Harichandra by his Brāhmaṇa wife were considered to be 'Brāhmaṇa Pratīhāra' and those begotten on his Kshatriya wife, 'Kshatriya Pratīhāra'. It is the descendants of the Kshatriya Pratīhāra Rajjila, who himself was born of the Kshatriya wife of Harichandra, who became famous as 'Kshatriya Pratīhāra' and also simply as 'Pratīhāra'. A later inscription viz., the Ghatiyala Inscription of Kakkuka (918 V. S.), however, brings to our notice that Harichandra was a 'Pratīhāra', by virtue of his being born in the line of Lakshmaṇa, brother of the mythical king Rāmachandra of Ayodhya, of the solar race. It is interesting to note that within such a short period, not exceeding even a quarter of a century, the pedigree of this particular family passed into the realm of utter confusion.

3. Cf. Ghatiyala Inscription of Kakkuka, *E.I.*, ix, p. 277 ff.
   वेदशास्त्र-पारगः द्विजा श्री हरिचन्द्राख्यः
   (*E.I.*, xviii, p. 95).

4. In the aforesaid Ghatiyala Inscription Harichandra has been styled *Pratīhāra Vaṁśaguru* (आसीत् प्रतीहारवंशंगुरु सद्विजः श्री हरिचन्द्र). In Sanskrit literature, the word *guru* not merely occurs in the sense of preceptor or teacher, but also in that of the 'venerable ancestor' (Monier Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, *s.v.* '*guru*'). According to Sanskrit lexicographers *guru* is one who is 'venerable', 'highly respected', 'worshipful' or 'glorious'. Evidently, therefore, there is a close association between the words *guru* and *Gaurava*. Under the circumstances it will not be proper to suppose that Harichandra was the preceptor of some Pratīhāra family, the sense in which it has been taken by some scholars. The word in question also occurs in Pāli literature in this very same sense. According to the lexicographer

Harichandra has been found to occur only in a few inscriptions but in all of them the genealogy has been traced from him as the progenitor of the Pratīhāra ruling family and also as a Brāhmaṇa well-versed in sacred literature.

He had two wives–one of whom was a Brāhmaṇa and the other a Kshatriya. Sons born of his Brāhmaṇa wife became Pratīhāra Brāhmaṇas while the sons from his Kshatriya wife Bhadrā laid the foundation of the Kshatriya royal line of the Pratīhāras.[1] It is interesting to note that while his

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Moggallāna anyone who first emerges or becomes prominent (in a line) is *garu* ("*Abhidhammavibhāvinīpadayojañayaṁ panā 'garati uggachchhati uggato pākato bhāvatiti garu'. Gara uggame....*"—*Abhidhānappadīpikāsūchi,* ed., W. Subhuti, p. 110, Colombo 1893). Obviously, he is of the opinion that the progenitor of a family is worthy of being considered or styled *garu.* It may be noted here that the word *garu* is the optional form of *guru* which also occurs in Pāli as in Sanskrit. There is thus no valid reason for considering Harichandra to be the Preceptor of some Pratīhāra family when both in Sanskrit and Pāli, the word *guru* occurs in the sense of "progenitor" and even of "venerable ancestor". If, however, we take the word *guru* occurring befor the name of Harichandra to mean "preceptor", as has been done by some scholars, we will then have to admit not only the existence of an older Pratīhāra family, flourishing before his time, but also the spiritual relationship of the later Pratīhāra family (of Harichandra) with the earlier one which is so far unknown to history. Taking everything into consideration, we have taken the compound प्रतीहारवंशगुरुः in the sense of the Venerable Progenitor of a particular Pratīhāra royal family, as has been suggested by the Jodhpur Inscription of Bāuka, mentioned above. That the Pratīhāra family actually emerged in the political arena of Western India with his third son Rajjila, has been attested by epigraphic evidence. If the *Brāhmaṇa* Harichandra was not a 'Pratīhāra' himself and if the Pratīhāra lineage is traced from his third son born of his Kshatriya wife, he *ipso facto* becomes *Pratīhāra vaṁśaguru,* which is perhaps the most correct expression to designate him.

[1] The Pratīhāra rulers, whether of Māṇḍavyapura or of Bhillamāla, claim their descent from Lakshmaṇa of the Epic fame who acted as the *Pratīhāra* (doorkeeper) of his eldest brother Rāmachandra during the period of his exile (cf. *E.I.*, xviii, pp. 107-14; ibid., p. 95 ff). They had thus established a connection with the Ikshvāku family of Ayodhyā and with that, the line of the Sun (*Sūryavaṁśa*). To what

Kshatriya wife Bhadrā has been given the title *rājñī* in the aforesaid Ghatiyala inscription, no such expression has been used in it to qualify his Brāhmaṇa wife.[1] The four sons of Harichandra from his Kshatriya wife are stated to be Bhogabhaṭa, Kakka, Rajjila and Dadda. What appears to us to be a fact is, that after the dismemberment of the empire of Yaśodharman, Harichandra succeeded in establishing a principality for himself but we do not know exactly where it should be located in view of the epigraphic information that it was his sons who conquered Māṇḍavyapura (Mandor) and fortified it, evidently with the intention of making it their political headquarters.[2]

The four sons of Harichandra by his queen Bhadrā are described as fit to hold the earth.[3] Some scholars, basing their arguments on this piece of information, have suggested that probably each of them ruled over a separate principality and we, too, also share the very same view.[4] According to

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extent such claims are fantastic is apparent from the fact that, according to the bardic tales current in Rajasthan, the Parihar (Pratīhāra) rulers of the Mediaeval period belonged to the *Agni-kula* which means, if anything, that they claim their descent from the Fire or *Agni* like the Pawars (Paramāras), the Chauhans (Chāhamānas), and the Solankis (Chālukyas).

1. *E.I.*, xviii, p. 95.
2. Cf. Ghatiyala Inscription, no. ii, (*E.I.* ix, p. 277 ff). Jodhpur Inscription :

माण्डव्यपुर दुर्गेस्मिन्नेभिर्निजभुजार्जिते प्राकार : कारतस्तुंगो विद्विशांभीतिवर्द्धन :
(*E.I.*, xviii, p. 95).

According to Munshi "whether Harichandra, who was a very ambitious man, had taken advantage of his position as preceptor to a Kshatriya class to wield it into a well-disciplined force and to carve out a principality by its aid, or whether his sons by the Kshatriya wife succeeded to their maternal grandfather's throne remains a mystery. From a careful reading of the inscription, however, the latter probability appears the more natural" (*Glory That Was Gurjaradeśa*, p. 46).

3. *E.I.*, xviii, p. 95.
4. *Ibid.*

Māṇḍavyapura is evidently Mandor, the ancient capital of Marwar, near Jodhpur.

epigraphic evidence, Harichandra was succeeded by Rajjila, who was probably his third son.[1] In our opinion, it was he who annexed the locality then known as Māṇḍavyapura and fixed his capital there, after making adequate arrangements for its defence. The Pratīhāra inscriptions, however, throw no light on the activities of Rajjila's two successors, his son and grandson, Narabhaṭa and Nāgabhaṭa respectively. The sons of Nāgabhaṭa were Tāta and Bhoja, who ruled in succession–one after the other.

Harichandra and his three successors, mentioned above, probably ruled between c. 550 and 640 A.D.[2] It may, therefore, be reasonably concluded that Harichandra's grandson Narabhaṭa was the ruler of the Gurjara country who was subdued by Prabhākaravardhana, as mentioned by Bāṇa.[3] Later, with the rise of Harsha, the growing power of the Gurjaras must have received a further set-back.

The Chinese traveller, Hsuan Chuang, visited a Gurjara kingdom (Kiu-che-lo) in about 641 A.D.[4] His visit corresponds with the time when some ruler in the line of Harichandra was in power in *Gurjaratrā*.[5] The capital of this *Gurjara*

It appears from the Jodhpur Inscription that the region of *Gurjaratrā* was being gradually occupied by the rulers of this house. They built a huge rampart round the fort of Māṇḍavyapura which was gained by their own prowess. It is evident, therefore, that the Gurjaras under Harichandra and his sons had occupied the province known after them and proceeded up to Mandor, before the end of the sixth century A.D.

1. Cf. Ghatiyala Inscription, *E.I.*, ix, p. 277 ff.
2. As the dates of Kakkuka and Bāuka, representing the twelfth generation of kings, are respectively 861 and 837 A.D., Harichandra, the founder of the dynasty, may be placed at about 550 A D. (the average duration of a generation may be fairly taken to be about 25 years).
3. *H.C.*, p. 101
4. Watters, ii, p. 249, 336; Beal, ii, p. 270.
5. Hsuan Chuang places the kingdom of Kiu-che-lo, 18000 li or 300 miles to the north of the country of Valabhī. The proper restoration of Kiu-che-lo has been accepted to be Gurjara and, as the pilgrim mentions the countries of Saurāshṭra, Ānandapura, Ujjayinī, Sindhu and Mūlasthānapura surrounding Kiu-che-lo, the region must be regarded as corresponding to Central and Northern Rajputana.

kingdom, according to the pilgrim, was Pi-lo-mo-lo.[1] "The king", says he, "is of the Kshatriya caste. He is just twenty years old. He is distinguished for wisdom, and he is courageous. He is a deep believer in the law of Buddha and honours men of distinguished ability."[2] The king has been identified with Tāta, the son and successor of Nāgabhaṭa, and the fifth ruler in the line of Harichandra.[3] According to Epigraphic evidence, King Tāta, considering the life to be evanescent as lightning, abdicated in favour of his younger brother and himself returned to hermitage, practising there the rules of true religion.[4] We may, therefore, take that he ruled only for a short period and was succeeded by his younger brother Bhoja. No information about the reign of Bhoja is so far available to us and it is impossible for us to determine the date of his accession. One fact, however, seems certain : both Tāta and his younger brother Bhoja were contemporaries of Hsuan Chuang. After Bhoja, the throne reverted to the family of Tāta and his three successors ruled probably between 640 and 710 A.D. Nothing, however, is known about Bhoja and his successors from the Pratīhāra inscriptions. They seem to have ruled from c. 650 to 710 A.D. With the death of Chanduka the original Pratīhāra dynasty came to an end and in its place appeared another more powerful one viz., the Pratīhāras of Bhillamāla of which the first ruler, so far as we know, was Nāgabhaṭa I (c. 756 A.D.). Since he was also a Pratīhāra and ruled over *Gurjaratrābhūmi* from Bhillamāla, he might have been related to Chanduka. What appears to us is that there were two more Pratīhāra rulers between Chanduka and Nāgabhaṭa, one of whom was the son of the former and other the father of the latter. But both of them were non-descripts. It may be noted here that it has been possible for us to connect the original Pratīhāra family of Harichandra with that of its branch line of which the first known member was Nāgabhaṭa I, through the itinerary of Hsuan Chuang and certain epigraphic records Thus, while the former suggests that a certain ruler in the line of Harichandra, probably Tāta, was ruling at Bhillamāla, the inscriptional sources in question definitely mention the dynasty of Nāgabhata I as Pratīhāra. It is needless to mention here that the capital of the Imperial Pratīhāras, the dynasty of Nāgabhaṭa I, was Bhillamāla as we know also from epigraphic sources.

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[1] No satisfactory identification of Pi-lo-mo-lo has yet been established. Some scholars identify it with Bhillamāla or Bhinmal while others take it to be Balmer in Rajputana. Bühler, following Watson, accepts the former identification.

If Hsuan Chuang is to be believed, Bhillamāla was the second capital of the original Pratīhāra dynasty, the first one being Māṇḍavyapura. The possibility is that the capital was transferred at the time of Nāgabhaṭa, father of Tāta.

[2] Beal, ii, p. 270; Watters, ii, p. 249.

[3] As the pilgrim visited the kingdom about hundred years after the foundation of the dynasty, we may reasonably expect four generations of kings to have passed away during this period and the young king may be looked upon as the fifth. On referring to the dynastic list we find king Tāta occupying this position.

Cf., *E.I.*, xiii, p. 92.

[4] Jodhpur Inscription of Pratīhāra Bāuka, *E.I.*, xviii, pp. 95-6.

तातेन तेन लोकस्य विद्युच्चंचलजीवितम् बुध्वा राज्यं लघोर्भ्रातु श्री भोजस्य समर्पितम्
स्वयं च संस्थितस् तातः शुद्धं धर्मं समाचरन् ।

The Gurjaras of Nāndīpurī

Epigraphic records testify to the existence of a small principality with Nāndīpurī (modern Nandeval) as its headquarters, the rulers of which claimed connection with the royal family of the Gurjara country (*Gurjaranṛipativaṁśa*).[1] That Gurjara country, during the period in question, can only be *Gurjaratrā* or *Gurjaratrābhūmi* over which Harichandra and his descendants had ruled. The founder of that small principality was Dadda I since his name comes first in the dynastic list available from the inscriptions of that family.[1] Regarding the date of that king, it may be safely said that he came to the throne about 580 A.D., taking the recorded dates for his successes into consideration. This fact enables us to establish his identity with Dadda who was one of the four sons of Harichandra mentioned above.[2] From the Ghatiyala Inscription of Kakkuka, it is evident that the sons of Harichandra made extensive conquests and thereby considerably expanded the kingdom of their father. We have, therefore, reasons to believe that after the death of Harichandra, his sons partitioned the kingdom amongst themselves and in the share of Dadda fell the regions roundabout Nāndīpurī. Thus, while Rajjila fixed his capital at Māṇḍavyapura, Dadda I established himself at Nāndīpurī and made it the seat of his government.[3]

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[1] *I.A.*, xiii, pp. 81, 88; *ibid.*, ii, p. 21; *ibid.*, v, p. 41. Nāndīpurī has been identified by Bühler with an old fort of the same name to the north of the east gate of Broach (*I.A.*, vii, p. 62). Bhagwanlal Indraji identified it with Nandod, situated on the Karanjan river in the former Rajpipla State (*Bombay Gazetteer*, i, ii, p. 314, n. 6). Indraji's view is now generally accepted.

The capital was later on transferred to Bhārukachchha (Cf. *E.I.*, xxv, p. 293).

As regards the reign of Dadda I, there is a problem which we cannot possibly overlook. About him the question that confronts us here is, whether he was ruling independently or subservient to the political authority of his brother Rajjila who was, in all probability, the eldest son of Harichandra.[4] An answer to this question is not far enough to seek. From the Kaira Plates of Dadda II (Kalachuri Saṁvat 380=A.D. 629), it appears that his grandfather Dadda I bore the title *Sāmanta*.[5] It is obvious, therefore, that Dadda I did not rule

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[1] *I. A.*, xiii, pp. 81, 88.

[2] Cf. Majumdar, *J.D.L*, x, p. 11.

[3] Nothing can be said with certainty whether Māṇḍavyapura became the political headquarters of the original Pratīhāra dynasty at the time of Rajjila or in that of his father Harichandra. It is, however, certain that Rajjila and some of his successors ruled from that city till, for some reason or other, the seat of government was transferred to Bhillamāla, as we have already noticed.

[4] The mere fact that Rajjila continued to rule from Māṇḍavyapura after the demise of his father is a proof that he was the heir-apparent being the eldest of all the four uterine brothers (sons of Bhadrā, the Kshatriya wife of Harichandra).

[5] *I.A.*, xiii, p. 81.

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as an independent king, but as feudatory of his eldest brother Rajjila.[1] The house of Dadda I is, therefore, to be considered in history to have been a feudatory Pratīhāra house of Nāndīpurī. Whether the other two brothers of Rajjila were similarly posted in other parts of the kingdom of Māṇḍavyapura, cannot be asserted definitely for lack of information. That the reign of Dadda I was an uneventful one is apparent from the records of his successors. His death took place according to our computation sometime about 605 A.D.

The son and successor of Dadda I was Jayabhaṭa who bore the epithet *Vītarāga*. His accession, according to our calculations, took place about 605 A.D. and seems to have ruled up to about 627 A.D. Whether he acted as a *Sāmanta* of the contemporary Pratīhāra ruler of Māṇḍavyapura is indeed difficult to say, since the inscription of Dadda II makes no reference to that fact. Presumably, therefore, he ruled independently so long as the political condition of Western India was favourable for him, but he was not destined to maintain his independence probably towards the later part of his reign because of a political calamity that had overtaken all petty kings like him, ruling over the neighbouring territories, as we shall see below.

A remarkable feature of the history of the Gurjara royal family of Nāndīpurī is that, originating as a feudatory family, it maintained that character throughout its long course of history, sometime as subservient to the Pratīhāras, sometimes to the Chālukyas, sometimes to the Maitrakas and even sometimes to the Pushpabhūtis. We have already seen that Dadda I, with whom the family originated, was himself a feudatory of the Pratīhāras of Māṇḍavyapura. His son Jayabhāṭa probably enjoyed independence but it could be only for a brief period. The Chālukyan emperor Pulakeśin II ascended the throne in c. 608 A.D. and continued to rule at least up to 642 A.D. From his Aihole inscription it clearly appears that the Mālavas, the Lāṭas, the Gurjaras, the Banavāsīs and the

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[1] Cf. Bühler, *I.A.*, xvii, p. 194; Majumdar, *J.D.L.*, x, p. 11 ff.

Mauryas had acknowledged his political supremacy.[1] Obviously, therefore, these rulers were reduced to vassalage by that Chālukyan monarch. The Gurjaras mentioned in the Aihole inscription were most certainly of Nāndīpurī, and the ruler who had to bear the serfdom of the Chālukyas appears to be Jayabhaṭa. In the period of interregnum that followed the death of Pulakeśin II, the Maitrakas of Valabhī had exercised political supremacy over that Gurjara territory and finally when Harsha stretched his victorious arms as far as Kuntala and conquered the whole western part of India, the contemporary ruler of Nāndīpurī had to submit to him. It is really an unfortunate episode in the history of the Gurjara rule in India; but the fact that it was so cannot be denied, taking the sequence of political events into consideration. In our opinion, in the later part of his reign, Jayabhaṭa was probably a feudatory of Pulakeśin II.

The death of Jayabhaṭa probably took place in about 627 A. D. and he was succeeded by his son Dadda II. Since the dates supplied by epigraphic records belonging to his reign are 629 and 641 A. D., we presume that he ascended the throne about 627 A. D. From the Nausari Copper-plate Inscription of Jayabhaṭa II, we learn that his father Dadda II had given protection to a king of Valabhī, who had been defeated by Emperor Harsha.[2] The earliest and the latest known dates for the reign of Dhruvasena II correspond with those of Dadda II, who was, therefore, the exact contemporary not only of that Valabhī king but also of Harsha. It is really a matter of wonder, how a petty king of Nāndīpurī was able to give portection against such a powerful monarch like Harshavardhana, but it may be presumed that in a bold venture of that kind, he counted more on the strength of his overlord Pulakeśin II rather than that of his own.[3] Thus in the reign

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1. *E.I.*, vi, p. 6 ff.
2. Nausari Copper-plate Grant of Dadda II, *I.A.*, xiii, p. 77.
   परमेश्वर श्रीहर्षदेवाभिभूत वलभीपति-पतिरि त्राणोपजात भ्रमद् अदभ्र सुभ्र-आभ्र यशोवितान: श्री दद्दस्तस्य ।
3. In this connection Majumdar states that "everything would be clear if it is admitted that Broach was a feudatory state of the dynasty of

of Dadda II, an alliance was established between the Chālukyas, the Gurjaras and the Maitrakas, but it did not last long. Nearly a decade after his victory over Harsha, Pulakeśin II suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Pallava king Narasiṁhavarman I. Almost about that time Harsha had succeeded in establishing a matrimonial alliance with the royal house of Valabhī by giving his daughter in marriage to Dhruvasena II, otherwise known as Dhruvabhaṭa, who, as we know, had played an important part in the Sixth Quinquennial Assembly of that Pushpabhūti Emperor at Prayāga. On the death of Pulakeśin II, Dadda II might have regained his independence, since the political condition of Western India and the Deccan was evidently suited for the same. When Hsuan Chuang visited his kingdom in or about 641 A. D., it was in a flourishing condition.[1]

During the reign of Dadda II, his kingdom was raided by the Arabs. We learn from Al Biladuri that in or about 637–38 A. D. (15 or 16 A. H.), during the *Khilafat* of 'Umar', Hakam, the brother of Usman Bin Asi Sakifi, who was the governor of Bahrain, sent an expedition against Broach (Baranz) under Mughira, who defeated its ruler.[2] But, according to the *Chach-nama*, the Arab invaders were defeated and repulsed.[3] It is evident, therefore, that Dadda II had successfully repelled the invaders and maintained the independence of his kingdom. No political significance should be attached to such abortive Muslim raids.

Dadda II probably died about 642 A. D. and was succeeded by his son Jayabhaṭa II. It is difficult to suggest when actually his reign terminated, in the absence of any authentic

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Harichandra and remember its hereditary enmity with the royal house of Thaneśvara" (*E.I.*, xxviii, p. 92). He seems to have completely missed the fact that Gurjaras had been kept in subordination by the Pushpabhūtis since the time of Prabhākaravardhana and during this period the Gurjaras of Bhillamāla were not so powerful as to come in direct conflict with Emperor Harsha.

1. Watters, ii, p. 249.
2. *Futuh-al-Buldan*, tr. Elliot and Dawson, i, p. 116.
3. *Ibid*.

information, but we presume that he continued to rule up to c. 665 A. D. During the reign of this king, his territory was invaded by the Valabhī king Dharasena IV (c. 643–650 A.D.). And it is evident also from two inscriptions of the latter dated in the year 330 G. E. (649–50 A. D.) that they were issued from the "victorious camp at Bṛigukachchha" which actually lay in the territory of the Gurjaras of Nāndīpurī.[1] Since Jayabhaṭa had ruled many years after that invasion, the only reasonable conclusion that we can draw is that he had tendered his submission to his more powerful enemy, and continued to exercise his authority over the kingdom as his vassal chief. Available epigraphic records do not throw any more light on the history of his reign, which may have been, therefore, an uneventful one. He was succeeded by his son Dadda III in c. 665 A. D.

The reign of the succeeding king Dadda III is really important in the political history of Western India during this period. The political supremacy of the Maitrakas over the Gurjara kingdom of Nāndīpurī appears to have continued even after the death of Jayabhaṭa II. This fact is apparent from an inscription dated in the year 357 G. E. (676–77 A.D.) of the Valabhī king Śīlāditya III (c. 660–685 A. D.) issued from Bhṛigukachchha.[2] It is therefore, amply evident, that Dadda III ascended the throne not as an independent king but as one of the vassal chiefs of the Maitrakas who were undoubtedly very powerful about this time. It is, however, evident that he was prepared to accept the Chālukyan Emperor Vikramāditya I (655–68I A.D.) as the overlord rather than the aforesaid Valabhī king for reasons which history has not cared to record, but it is a fact that, with the help of that Chālukyan monarch, he threw off the Valabhī yoke after routing the army of the Maitrakas.[3] This event, as already stated above, took place between 677 and 685 A. D. It is interesting to note that Dadda III, by masterly strategy, not only strengthened his position by becoming a loyal ally of Vikramāditya I, but succeeded in creating a hostile feeling between the two powerful royal houses of the time—the Chālukyas and the Maitrakas. His diplomacy and astuteness deserve indeed a word of recognition.

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[1] *I.A.*, vii, p. 77 ff; *ibid.*, xv, p. 339 ff.

[2] Garde, *Important Inscriptions from the Baroda State*, i, p. 18 ff.

[3] Cf. Nausari Plates of Jayabhaṭa III, *I.A.*, xiii, p. 80.

The death of Dadda III took place in about 690 A. D. in which year his son Jayabhaṭa III also ascended the throne.[1] The latter continued to rule even beyond 706 A. D.; but it is difficult to say precisely when his rule came to an end. Available epigraphic records of the period are virtually silent about the history of his reign which we may, therefore, consider to be an uneventful one. *En passant*, it may be mentioned here that the rulers of Nāndīpurī, who came after him, were also non-descripts like him.

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[1] *I.A.*, xiii, p. 80.

CHAPTER X

THE KĀRKOṬAS OF KASHMIR

Of all the numerous dynasties and kingdoms that have flourished in ancient India, Kashmir alone can boast of the unique advantage of possessing a written history from the earliest times. This saga of Kashmir is known as *Rājataraṅgiṇī* and was composed in the twelfth century A.D. by the poet Kalhaṇa. The author tells us in the colophon that he was the son of a Minister of State; he evidently had free access to the royal court and its records. Yet, unlike other Indian poets who composed panegyrics, in Sanskrit, of kings who were their patrons, Kalhaṇa did not write in praise of any particular king or a royal family. Rather, this work is a history in poetry and his verses are numerous windows through which we get glimpses of the past centuries whose events have been narrated by him. A spirit of historic truthfulness, lending reality to his narration, permeates most of his detailed descriptions throughout the latter portions of the Chronicle.

Kalhaṇa traces the history of Kashmir from about 1184 B.C. and gives an account of the early kings in the manner of a *Kavi.* He, however, carefully avoids giving any dates until he could do so with approximate accuracy and certitude. As he did not have at his disposal sufficient reliable materials for the early period of his historical narration, Kalhaṇa chose to summarise a number of earlier chronicles, which are more or less of a mythical character. The first canto, therefore, contains such marvellous stories, told brilliantly, which belong to the domain of legends and folklore. In the second and third cantos the marvellous element still preponderates, although we have undoubted fragments of genuine historical tradition mixed up with the same. Often the author himself felt embarrassed describing incidents "which cannot be believed by common people."[1] For example Raṇāditya, great-grandson of Pravarasena, is stated to have ruled for three hundred years![1] During this period the valley was ruled by the Kushāṇa and Hūṇa kings as we hear of such names as Kanishka, Mihirakula, Toramāṇa and Pravarasena. But with the fourth canto we emerge from this world of myth and legend. From the very beginning of the 7th cent. A.D. Kalhaṇa's account gradually approaches a historical character in narration and therefore draws, what may be styled as the actual historical period, of the history of Kashmir along with the rise of the Kārkoṭa dynasty.[2]

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[1] *R. T.*, iii, 94.

The Kārkoṭa dynasty was founded by Durlabhavardhana. He was an officer of Bālāditya, the last king of the Gonanda dynasty which ruled before the rise of the Kārkoṭas, and had married Anaṅgalekhā, the beautiful daughter of his ruler.[3] Bālāditya had lost his son during his own lifetime and, therefore, the throne of Kashmir fell vacant after his death. Durlabhavardhana, by his judicious conduct and forbearance, had won the respect and affection of the minister Kaṅkha whom he had discovered guilty of a love-intrigue. After Bālāditya's death, therefore, while the principal ministers of the deceased king were hesitant, Kaṅkha, out of gratitude, established Durlabhavardhana on the throne.[4]

The new dynasty founded by Durlabhavardhana is known as the Kārkoṭa dynasty as its founder is said to have been an offspring of the Nāga Karkoṭa.[5] Stein treats the whole story as a complete myth which was obviously created by the court-poets to cover up the humble origin of the new king.[6] But it is also quite possible that he might have been born in some Nāga family and, therefore, this myth became current in Kashmir.

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1. *R. T.*, iii, 470.
2. A variant of the dynastic name is 'Kārkoṭaka' also.
3. *R. T.*, iii, 484, 489.
4. *Ibid.*, iii, 528.
5. *Ibid.*, iii, 529.
According to the Epic and Paurāṇic traditions the Kārkoṭa-Nāgas were in the Deccan (*Mahābhārata*, viii, 44, 2066; iii, 65, 2671; viii, 34, 1483; *Padma Purāṇa*, vi, 242, 2.)
6. Stein, *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (tr.), p. 86.

We may notice in this connection that even Hsuan Chuang has recorded that the people of Kashmir were "protected by a dragon."[1] Besides, the fact that Bālāditya had given his only daughter in marriage to him also indicates that he must have been a man of high origin and position. Anyway, due to paucity of evidence we are unable to advance any views on this point.

Durlabhavardhana appears to have been a powerful ruler and extended his suzerainty over a number of neighbouring states. According to Hsuan Chuang, who visited Kashmir during his reign To-ch'a-shi-lo (Takshaśilā), Sengha-pu-lo (Siṁhapura), Wu-la-Shih (Uraśā), Pan-nuts'o (Punch) and Ho-lo-she-pu-lo (Rājaputra) formed parts of the kingdom of Kashmir.[2] Thus the new king ruled not only over Kashmir proper but also over a considerable portion of the Punjab and the district of Rawalpindi. According to the Chinese annals, sometime between the years 627-49 A.D., a king of India, Tu-lo-pa by name, was entrusted with the charge of conveying the envoys of Ki-pin to their own country.[3] Cunningham has identified the king with Durlabhavardhana.[4] If the identification be correct, we have to assume that this Kashmir king also controlled the route from China to the Kabul valley during that period.

We have already noticed elsewhere that Harsha took away by force the 'Tooth-relic' of the Buddha preserved in Kashmir.[5] As Durlabhavardhana was a contemporary of Harsha, we have no doubt that the incident took place during his reign. From the story, as narrated in the *Life*, it is appa-

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1. Watters, i, p. 261; see also p. 265.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 240, 248, 256, 283, 284.
3. Remusat, A., *Nouv. Melanges asiat.*, i, p. 212.
4. *Coins of Mediaeval India*, p. 38.
   Assuming the identification of Tu-lo-pa with Durlabha to be correct, it still remains doubtful whether this ruler or his son, Durlabhaka (or Durlabha, see *R. T.*, iv, 44), is meant here. According to Kalhaṇa's chronology, the above period is divided between the reigns of these two kings.
5. *Life*, p. 183.

rent that the Kashmir king had, in a way, to acknowledge the supremacy of Harsha as the latter was a very powerful emperor.[1]

As Durlabhavardhana was a person of great intellect, Bālāditya gave him a second name *Prajñāditya* besides bestowing on him, from time to time, large fortunes.[2] With his accession, Kashmir, for the first time, came under the administration of a strong line of rulers and soon became one of the most powerful states in Northern India. He died after a reign of thirty-six years.[3]

Durlabhavardhana was succeeded by his son Durlabhaka who assumed the title Pratāpāditya (II), probably in keeping with the family tradition of his maternal grandfather whose descendant he was.[4] Apart from the founding of Pratāpapura by Durlabhaka, Kalhaṇa relates only the romantic episode of his marriage with Narendraprabhā, previously the wife of a merchant settled in Kashmir.[5] She bore the king three sons, Chandrāpīḍa, Tārāpīḍa, and Muktāpīḍa, who were also known by their titular names of Vajrāditya, Udayāditya, and Lalitāditya respectively.[6] Durlabhaka enjoyed a fairly long reign of fifty years [7]

Durlabhaka was succeeded by his eldest son, Chadrāpīḍa, naturally at an advanced age. He was a pious and meritorious king and many stories of his high sense of justice and concern for the welfare of his subjects are related by Kalhaṇa. For example, when he built the temple of Tribhuvanasvāmin, a leather-tanner refused to give up his hut which stood in the way of the temple site. The king refused permission to his officers to eject him by force, whereupon the tanner, moved by the king's sense of justice, sold his hut to him.[1] He died after a brief reign of nearly nine years as, according to Kalhaṇa, he became a victim of witchcraft (*abhichāra*) practised against him by his younger brother, Tārāpīḍa.[2]

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[1] See Ch. III.

[2] *R. T.*, iii, 494.

[3] *Ibid.*, iv, 6.

[4] *Ibid.*, iv, 7 and 8.
As Bālāditya had died without a male issue, the functions prescribed for a son by religious law as well as the inheritance devolved naturally on his daughter's son (Cf. *Manu*, ix, 131).

[5] *Ibid.*, iv, 10.
Pratāpapura has been identified with the modern village Tapar in the Kruhin Pargana situated on the road from Baramula to Srinagar.

[6] *Ibid.*, iv, 39, 42 and 43.

[7] *Ibid.*, iv, 44.

Tārāpīḍa thus succeeded his brother to the throne of Kashmir. He is said to have been a cruel and tyrannical ruler. But he himself became a victim of witchcraft which he is said to have used to get rid of his elder brother. According to Kalhaṇa, after a very brief rule of about four years, he succumbed to some magic (*abhichāra*) practised by a Brāhmaṇa whom he had oppressed.[3]

After the death of Tārāpīḍa, his brother Muktāpīḍa *alias* Lalitāditya succeeded to the throne of Kashmir. He was a very strong ruler and asserted his power far beyond Kashmir and its adjacent territories. His accession, however, took place during the last few years of the seventh century A.D. and his reign, therefore, actually extended over the first quarter of the eighth century A.D., beyond the period under review.

APPENDIX

Chronology of the Kārkoṭas.

Kalhaṇa tells us that he began his work in the Śaka year 1070 corresponding to the year 4224 of the *Laukika* era (1148 A.D.) and he finished it in the year 4225 (1149 A.D.). He, however, carefully avoids giving any dates until he could do so with certainty and accuracy. Thus the first three cantos contain no dates and we have no chronological data whatsoever except such as may be deduced from the stated length of individual reigns. On the other hand, we

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1. *R. T.*, iv, 55–57.
2. *Ibid.*, iv, 112, 118.
3. *Ibid.*, iv, 124.

find that, from the concluding part of the fourth canto onwards, the dates of accession of individual rulers are indicated by the quotation of the exact years of the *Laukika* era, coupled in most cases with equally precise statements of the months and days. He actually begins to give exact dates from verse 703 of the fourth canto; the first date is the year 3889 of the *Laukika* era (813-14 A.D.). There is no doubt that Kalhaṇa's history after this date is a faithful and accurate record and the defective chronology of the ancient period is due to the errors of the early chroniclers. He was not only a poet, but a historian also, as he tells us that he had consulted the early chronicles, biographies and inscriptions, royal grants and charters and corrected errors. The dates of the Kārkoṭa kings have, undoubtedly, therefore, to be calculated by the durations of the reigns of the rulers as follows :

	Yr. m. d.
Kings of the Gonanda Dynasty ...	1014 – 9 – 9
,, ,, ,, Vikramāditya ,, ...	192 – 0 – 0
,, ,, ,, Gonanda ,, (restored)	572 – 6 – 1
Total up to the end of Bālāditya ...	1779 – 3 – 10

By deducting the period of 1779 years, 3 months and 10 days from 2,333 years (the period that passed between Gonanda III and the date of Kalhaṇa i.e., Śaka 1070), we get 552 years, 8 months and 20 days or 517 years, 3 months and 10 days in Śaka era corresponding to 595 years, 5 months and 24 days in A.D. as the end of the reign of Bālāditya or the accession of Durlabhavardhana.

We may, however, note here that, as incredibly long periods of reign have been assigned to most of the early rulers, some scholars entertain suspicions about these figures. For example, at the end of the first canto, twenty-one kings are stated to have ruled over a period of 1014 years, 9 months and 9 days. Scholars, therefore, feel hesitant in accepting the figures supplied by Kalhaṇa without question. In calculating the date of any individual, therefore, Wilson suggested that it was "advisable to commence with the most modern and recede gradually to the most remote dates." Let us, therefore, find out the date of Durlabhavardhana by calculating backwards from the date of the finish of Kalhaṇa's work to the accession of Durlabhavardhana. It may be worked out as follows :

		Yr. m. d.
(a)	Period from the accession of Durlabhavardhana to the end of the Kārkoṭa dynasty	260 – 5 – 20
(b)	Period from the end of the Kārkoṭa dynasty to Jayasiṁha, the last king	293 –10 – 15
	Total No. of years up to the end of 1072 Śaka (including the period of two years spent in compilation of the work)	554 – 4 – 5

By deducting 554 years, 4 months and 5 days from 1072 Śaka (the last date of Kalhaṇa's work) we get Śaka 517 years, 7 months and 25 days or with the addition of 78 years, 2 months and 14 days, the difference between the Śaka and Christian era, A.D. 595 years, 10 months and 9 days as the date of accession of Durlabhavardhana.

We, therefore, notice that the date, whether calculated upwards from the beginning or backwards from the end, is almost the same. A minor difference of only a few months which would therein arise is rather negligible when we take into consideration the period of 2333 years over which our datum is spread. The chronology of the Kārkoṭa kings can thus be set forth as follows :

Durlabhavardhana (36 years)	(Accession)	596 A.D.
Durlabhaka (50 years)	,,	632 A.D.
Chandrāpīḍa (8 years, 8 months)	,,	682 A.D.
Tārāpīḍa (4 years, 24 days)	,,	691 A.D.
Muktāpīḍa	,,	695 A.D.

We may point out in this connection that Cunningham had proposed a correction of 31 years in Kalhaṇa's computations so that the accession of Lalitāditya, according to him, might fall in 727 A.D.[1] According to him, the Chinese Annals of the T'ang dynasty throw a doubt on the correctness of the above calculated dates. The Chinese sources state that Chandrāpīḍa (Tchen-to-lo-pi-li) applied to the Chinese emperor for aid against the Arabs in 713 A.D. and, further, for the title of 'King' from him in 720 A.D., while according to Kalhaṇa's chronology, the Indian king died in 689 A.D. The information conveyed by the Chinese sources is interesting but so far unknown to us from any of the Indian sources. Even Kalhaṇa, who was fond of giving details, has not even alluded to the Arabs while narrating the reign of the Kārkoṭas. Besides, according, to him, peace and tranquility prevailed during the reign of Chandrāpīḍa. We, therefore, have grave doubts in the correctness of the story as given in the Chinese accounts and, in our opinion, most probably the Chinese names have not been correctly restored and identified.

It does not appear that Kalhaṇa took, as he is alleged to have done, any liberty with the lengths of reigns or dates whose careers and administrations he dealt with. Throughout his work he manifests a thorough acquaintance with facts and events of his narrative, not only as a compiler or chronicler of life-accounts, which he found in the older chronicles that served as materials for his own, but also as a critical and discriminating historian. He often relates incidents recorded by the previous chroniclers, but does not hesitate to throw doubts on their character, or even in rejecting them as unworthy of credence, whenever he finds proofs to the contrary.

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[1] *Coins of Mediaeval India*, pp. 38–9. See also Stein, *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (tr), p. 67.

CHAPTER XI

MINOR KINGDOMS

1. *The Kingdom of Sindh**

The history of Sindh, prior to its conquest by the Arabs at the beginning of the eighth century A.D., is obscure. The available data, meagre and inconclusive, consist solely of the accounts of a few Arab chroniclers, and we can only have a faint idea of the political conditions of this region during the seventh century A.D. The most lucid, account, though short, is found in the *Chach-nama*, a historical romance written by Ali in 1216 A.D. (613 A.H.).[1] *The Tarikh-i-Masumi* or *Tarikh-i-Sindh* and *Tuhfat-ul-Kiram*, two later works on the history of Sindh, are, to a great extent, based on the *Chach-nama* for their accounts of the earlier period. But we must remember that the history of Sindh, as told by its own historians, with its contradictions, is more romantic than historical in its treatment of events.

We are able to gather from these accounts that during the first half of the seventh cent, A.D., Sindh was ruled by the kings of the Rai dynasty. The *Chach-nama* and the *Tarikh-i-Masumi* mention three rulers of this dynasty viz, Rai Diwaji, his son Rai Sihras, and his son Rai Sahasi. But the *Tuhfat-ul Kiram* mentions two additional names after Rai Sahasi viz., Rai Sihras II (son of Rai Sahasi), and his son

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* The province of Sindh was quite large in its extent and acquired considerable importance in the succeeding centuries with the First Arab invasion in A. D. 712. We, however, are confronted with the difficulty of paucity of materials for studying the political history of the period under review. We are thus unable to weave a properly connected account of the history of this province and reluctantly have been, therefore, compelled to treat it along with the Minor Kingdoms.

[1] The *Chach-nama* is also known as *Tarikh-i-Hind wa Sindh* or *Fath-nama.* It was originally written in Arabic but later translated into Persian. All the later works on the history of Sindh like the *Tarikh-i-Masumi* or *Tarikh-i-Sindh* and *Tuhfat-ul-Kiram* are based on *Chach-nama* as far as early history is concerned.

Rai Sahasi II. Their kingdom is said to have embraced all the country between the mountains of Qikanan and Sistan on the North, the sea-coast and Debal on the South, Kashmir on the North-east, and Makran on the West. The central part of these territories was under the charge of the king who had his capital at Alor or Aror, while the rest was divided into four provinces, each under governors who resided respectively at Brahmanabad, Siwistan, Iskandah and Multan.

The King of Nirmuz (a province of Persia) is said to have invaded Sindh and killed Rai Sahiras II, who, on the departure of the Persians, was succeeded by his son Rai Sahasi II.[1] He entrusted the government to his Prime Minister 'Ram' and himself passed his days "in the bedchamber of happiness." After the death of Ram, one of his assistants, Chach, a *Brāhmaṇa*, was appointed in his place. Sahasi's queen Suhandi once saw him when he had gone to see the king on business inside the palace and violently fell in love with him. Chach prospered and soon became the most powerful man in the kingdom.

Sahasi II died without leaving any issue. Chach, who was an ambitious and unscrupulous man, disposed of all the relatives of the deceased king with the help of the queen and himself usurped the throne. He also married queen Suhandi and thus strengthened his powerful position in the kingdom. Chach was thus the founder of a new line of kings in Sindh.

According to the *Tuhfat-ul-Kiram*, the five rulers of the Rai dynasty mentioned above reigned for a period of 137 years and Chach ascended the throne in 622 A.D.[2] But, according to Hsuan Chuang, who visited Sindh in about 641 A.D., the country was ruled by a king who was of the *Śūdra* caste and a sincere believer in Buddhism.[3] It is, therefore, generally believed that when the Chinese pilgrim came to Sindh one of the kings of the Rai dynasty was on the throne and not Chach or his successor who were definitely Brāhmaṇas by caste.[1] He may have been Sahasi II and, most probably, he was also the king who was defeated by Harsha, as mentioned by Bāṇa. If this supposition be correct, then the rule of Rai kings and the accession of Chach has to be extended till about the middle of the seventh century A.D.

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[1] The king has been identified with Khusru Naushirwan, but Elliot thinks that he was the ruler of Sijistan or possibly Khusru Parvez. (Appdx. p. 172)

[2] *J. A. S. B.*, xiv, 1845, p. 78ff.

[3] Watters, ii. p. 252.

After the death of Sahasi II, his brother 'Rana Maharat,' king of Chittor, claimed the kingdom and set out for Alor with an army to dethrone the usurper. An engagement took place but Chach defeated and killed him. The provincial governors, some of whom were partisans of the dispossessed family, had also refused to acknowledge the authority of a usurper. Chach, therefore, appointed his brother Chandra as his prime Mintster and, leaving him to look after the capital, himself marched to subdue them.

Chach first attackd the ruler of Babiah and, after defeating and killing him, occupied the fort of Iskandah. Next, he conquered Sikkah and Multan whose ruler fled and took shelter in Kashmir. A year later, he directed his steps towards his southern provinces. After taking Siwistan (the country of the Sivist) he proceeded against Agham Luhanah, the powerful ruler of Brahmanabad. Agham was defeated in a battle outside his capital but he retired to his capital and Chach had to spend one whole year in the siege of his fort. The former, however, died in his besieged city and, after his death, his young son surrendered to Chach. While at Brahmanabad, Chach married Agham's widow and gave the daughter of his nephew, Dahiyah (or Daharsiah), to Agham's son, Sarhand, whom he also appointed his governor there.

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1. Cf. Smith, *E. H. I.*, p. 369; Vaidya, *H. M. H. I.*, i, p. 19. It is, however, not certain that the rulers of the Rai dynasty were *Śūdras*. The brother of Sahasi Rai II is said to have been the ruler of Chittor, and is said to have belonged to the Mori or the Maurya tribe which claimed to be Rajputs.

According to R. D. Banerji, Chach was also a Rajput of the Samna (Samba) tribe of the Yādava clan (*Prehistoric, Ancient and Hindu India*, p. 237.)

About this time, we learn from *Chach-nama* that Arab mercenaries had begun to seek their fortunes in Sindh. It was in the 36th year of his reign that one Mughairah commanded the first expedition from Arabia against Sindh during the Caliphate of Omar, though he was defeated and killed before the walls of Debal. Another expedition was sent during the Caliphate of Ali, but it had to return back because of the martyrdom of the Caliph after reaching Makran and Kiknan, the latter having been taken by force. Thus, Chach, who was by then firmly established, successfully withstood these expeditions though his successors were not so fortunate and perished before the continuous Arab onslaught.

Chach was an energetic and vigorous ruler and, according to the *Chach-nama*, reigned for forty years. We are not sure of the exact date of his death, but, according to our computations, it may have taken place in c. 683 A.D.[1] Chach was succeeded by his brother 'Chandar' (Chandra). He was a monk and during his reign promulgated the Buddhist religion. 'Mattah', the ruler of Siwistan, took advantage of the religious and peaceful nature of the king to induce the kings of Kānyakubja and Kashmir to join him in dethroning and seizing the kingdom from him.[2] Chandar was, however, successful in repulsing the combined armies of his enemies.

Chandar ruled for a period of seven years and was succeeded by Dahir, son of Chach, from his queen Suhandi, while Duraja, son of Chandar, established himself at Brahmanabad. But Duraja's rule at Brahmanabad did not exceed one year, as Daharsiah, another son of Chach, took possession of that place. He married Agham's daughter and stayed at Brahmanabad for about five years. Sohan, king of Batiah, in the country of 'Ramal' sent messengers to Daharsiah asking for the hand of his sister, Bai, in marriage, upon which, Daharsiah sent his sister to his brother at Alor in order that

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1. According to the *Chach-nama*, his death took place in about 670–71 A.D.
2. Cf. also Smith, *E.H.I.*, p. 369 and fn.

he might give her to Sohan.[1] But it is related in the *Chach-nama* that, on account of an astrological prediction, his sister would never go out of Alor and would marry none but a king. Dahir, with the connivance of his nobles, married her to his sword, though the marriage was neither intended to, nor was, consummated.[2] It is further stated that this led to a quarrel between the brothers and Daharsiah marched against Dahir. Daharsiah was, however taken ill during his progress and died. Dahir, thereupon, took possession of his treasury, married his widow, Agham's daughter, and occupied Brahmanabad

When Dahir had reigned for about eight years, his territory was invaded by the king of 'Ramal'. At this time an Arab named Muhammad Alaji, who had entered the service of Dahir with five hundred men of his clan, proved very useful. With his counsel and aid, Dahir fell upon the enemy at night and completely defeated him.

Dahir seems to have been a strong and powerful ruler, but he was defeated and killed after a reign of 33 years by Muhammad bin Qasim in 712 A. D. (93 A. H.) when the Arab conqueror invaded Sindh.[3]

2. *The Guhilots*

Of all Rajput clans the Guhilots (Guhilaputras) of Mewar occupy the foremost place and claim to have a long and traditionally illustrious ancestry. But it is needless to stress that a great difficulty confronts us in tracing their history for want of material. During the rolling on of successive centuries, the story of their origin has been lost in romantic tales and bardic traditions. Even the name by which this dynasty is known has seen many a transformation. The name '*Guhilot*' or '*Gehlot*' is a corruption of the Sanskrit word *Guhilaputra* recorded in the Chitorgadh Inscription of 1335 V. S. (1278 A. D.).[1]

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[1] According to the *Tuhfat-ul-Kiram* he is 'Raumalrai', king of Kānyakubja.

[2] Marriage to the sword constituted a perfectly legal custom among Rajput princes. It was resorted to in cases when the auspicious day for the wedding having arrived, the bridegroom, being absent in the battle-field or due to some other unavoidable reason, was not able to be present at the ceremony.

[3] According to the *Chach-nama,* the dynasty of Chach ruled for 92 years. But the total reign-period of the rulers is 80 (40+7+33) years only. It is, therefore, difficult to ascertain how far this account is historical.

According to epigraphic evidence at our disposal the first member of the Guhilot ruling family was Guhadatta after whom the dynasty was so called.[2] He was a Brāhmaṇa and had emigrated either from Ānandapura or Vadnagar.[3] The present notable descendants of Guhilots, the *Ranas* of Mewar, however, regard themselves as *Kshatriyas* of the Solar race and trace their origin to the Epic hero Rāma. They take their stand on the expression *Raghuvaṁśa kīrtipiśunaḥ* used in the Naravāhana Inscription of V. S. 1028 (971 A. D.) for the Guhilot family.[4] Ojha and Vaidya are strong champions of this view[5] Bhandarkar, on the other hand, held the view that the Guhilots were originally *Nāgara Brāhmaṇas.*[6] The view, that the Guhilots were originally Brāhmaṇas, has been accepted by a number of other scholars as well, though the origin of this family has become a matter of controversy amongst scholars.[7] In our opinion, the real origin of the Guhilots has been lost in legends and bardic tales current about them in Rajputana. A traditional account as recorded by Tod is as follows : "Guhil's father, Śīlāditya, ruled over Bansala or Bilbilpur Pattan, a place in Saurāṣṭra where he met his death at the hands of the barbarians from the north. His queen Puṣpāvatī, being pregnant had gone on a pilgrimage to the temple of Bhawānī, situated at Chandrāvatī (the old capital of the Parmars near Ābu), a town in her father's dominion. On her way back she received the news of Raja's death and destruction of his fort. She was then at a town Nagadrah or Nagda and the Brāhmaṇas of the place did not allow her to perform *Satī*. After some days a son was born to her, who was left to the care of Brāhmaṇī Kamalāvatī or according to a modern version, a Brāhmaṇa, Vijaya Dutta, who was the priest in a temple of Koteswar Mahadeva and longed for a son. On the hesitation of this Brāhmaṇa family (emigrated from Vadnagar or Virnagar) to accept a Kshatriya child, the Rani gave him the words that seven generations of the prince would follow the Brahmanic rites. Guhil made the Brāhmaṇa family which brought him up, his family Purohits or preceptors and they commanded great influence being the saviours of the line."[1] If there be a grain of truth in this bardic account, the Guhilots were originally *Kshatriyas*, and not *Brāhmaṇas*, as suggested by some scholars.[2]

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[1] Peterson, *Bhawanagar Inscription*, p. 75.

Other forms of the name to be found in the inscription are *Gobhilaputra*, *Guhilotānvaya* and *Guhilyavaṁśa* (*E.I.*, xli, p. 119; *Bhavanagar Inscriptions*, p. 74–5).

[2] Atpur Inscription of Śaktikumāra, *I. A.*, xxxix, 1910, p. 191, v. 6.

Other forms of his name mentioned in the inscriptions are *Guhāditya*, *Guhadit*, *Grahāditya* and *Guhila.*

[3] *J. A. S. B.*, 1909, p. 167–87; *I. A.*, xxxix, p. 186 ff.

[4] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, xxii, p. 166 ff.

[5] *History of Rajputana*, i, pp. 369–88; *H. M. H. I.*, ii, p. 330–3.

[6] *J. A. S. B.*, 1909, p. 167ff.

[7] Tod, *Rajasthan*, i; Crooke, *Introduction*; Banerji, A. C., *Rajput Studies*, pp. 8–9.

The Brāhmaṇa origin of Guhilots has also been mentioned by Nansi (*Chronicle*, p. 1) and Karim-ud-din (*J. A. S. B.*, vi, p. 179), writers of the 17th and 19th Cent. A. D. respectively.

The genealogy of the early Guhilot rulers is recorded in a number of inscriptions but, of these, the Atpur Inscription of 1034 V.S. (977 A. D.) is the earliest and the most complete record. According to it, Guhadatta was succeeded by a long line of kings though nothing of importance is known about them.[3] The immediate successors of Guhadatta were as follows :

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1. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, i. pp. 176-81.
2. Abul Fazl, writing about the Mewar princes, has also recorded that "as a Brāhmaṇa at the beginning of their history nurtured their houses, they (the Ranas) are accounted as belonging to this caste" (*Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. Jarrett, ii, p. 269.)
3. *I. A.*, xxxix, p. 191ff.

Guhadatta
|
Bhoja
|
Mahendra (I)
|
Nāga
|
Śīla
|
Aparājita
|
Mahendra (II)
|
Kālabhoja

The date of Guhadatta is yet unknown but, according to our computations, he ruled during the earlier part of the sixth cent. A.D.

Nāga may have been the first ruler of this family to have ruled during the seventh cent. A D. He was succeeded by Śīla. The Samoli Inscription of his reign, dated in V.S. 703 (646 A.D.), describes him as a *Narapati*, a conqueror of enemies and cause of delight to the Gods, the Brāhmaṇas and the preceptors.[1]

Śīla was succeeded by his son Aparājita. The Kundesvara Inscription dated V. S. 718 (661 A.D.) belonging to his reign describes him as "proficient in destroying all the turbulent elements and served by a number of Rajas who bowed their heads before him."[2] It is, therefore, possible that he may have enlarged his territorial jurisdiction by annexing certain neighbouring regions. Besides this eulogy in the above mentioned epigraph, nothing else of note is known about him or his two immediate successors, Mahendra II and

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[1] *Nāgarī Prachāriṇī Patrikā* (N. S.), i, pp. 322-3.

[2] *E. I.*, iv, pp. 31-2.

Kālabhoja (his son and grandson respectively), who ruled during the seventh Cent. A.D.[1]

3. *The Chāpas*

Another dynasty of a comparatively lesser importance about which our information is restricted to a few literary references and which seems to have flourished during this period was that of the Chāpas. The earliest reference and information at our disposal about them is confined to the bare fact that a certain person, Chāpa by name, was the founder of a dynasty whose descendant, Vyāghramukha, was ruling somewhere in the Gurjaradeśa in A.D. 628.[2] Brahmagupta, the famous astronomer and author of the *Brahmasphuṭa-siddhānta* has preserved his name in the aforesaid work which was written in Śaka 550 (628 A.D.) "in the reign of Śrī Vyāghramukha of the Chāpa dynasty."[3] Brahmagupta has been styled as "*Bhillamālāchārya*" by a subsequent commentator, and from this it has been inferred that the astronomer lived in Bhillamāla and that Vyāghramukha was the ruler of that city. This view, however, cannot be accepted as we have seen that the city of Bhillamāla was included within the territories of the Pratīhāra rulers during this period. The locality where the Chāpas ruled during the seventh cent. A.D. cannot, therefore, be determined with exactitude.

4. *The Mauryas*

The existence of several ruling families of this name in the seventh century A. D. and later is proved by epigraphic records. They are first mentioned in connection with the conquests of Kīrtivarman I (566–598 A. D.), father of Pulakeśin II. He is described as "the night of destruction to the Nalas, the Mauryas and the Kadambas" in the Aihole Inscription.[4]

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[1] Since the Guhilots do not occupy or gain any particular importance in so far as political history and their activities are concerned during the 7th century A. D., we have not entered into the details of their origin, etc.

[2] Haddala Copper-plate Inscription of Dharaṇīvarāha, *I. A.*, xii, p. 193 ff; *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, viii, p. 27.

[3] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, viii, p. 27.

[4] *E. I.*, vi, p. 10 ff.

They are also spoken of again in the Kauthem Grant, and other records of that class, as having been conquered by him.[1] All further information that we have about them, and for the same early period, is a statement in the Aihole Inscription that they were overwhelmed in the Konkan, by the armies that were sent against them by Pulakeśin II.[2] It is not improbable that their capital named as "Purī, the goddess of fortune of the western ocean", in the verse immediately following that in which their subjugation is recorded, was either Gharapurī (i. e., the island of Elephanta on the east side of the Bombay harbour) or Rājpurī (near Janjira in Kolaba).

The Mauryas are again referred to in an inscription discovered at Jhalrapatan dated in the year 746 V. S. (689 A.D.). It mentions a king Durgagaṇa of the Maurya family.[3] According to epigraphic evidence and tradition prevalent in Rajputana, a Maurya family also ruled at Chitor before it was conquered by the Guhilot ruler Bappā sometime in the first half of the eighth century A.D.[4]

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1. *I. A.*, xvi, p. 15.
2. *E. I.*, vi, p. 10 ff; *I. A.*, viii, p. 242.
3. *I. A.*, v, p. 181.
4. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, i, p. 703.

APPENDIX

REPRESENTATIVE COINS OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY A.D., CURRENT IN NORTHERN INDIA.

VISHṆUGUPTA CHANDRĀDITYA

(GOLD)

Archer Type

Obv. King, nimbate, stands facing left and holding bow in left hand and arrow in right. Garuḍa standard on the left. Beneath the left arm of the king is written vertically : *Vishṇu*, and between his feet : *ru*. No marginal legend. Crescent above the vertical inscription.

Rev. Lakshmī, nimbate, seated cross-legged on lotus, facing front. She holds a lotus with stalk in her left hand which rests on her knee, while with her outstretched right hand she holds lotuses with long stalks. Symbol on the left. Marginal legend : *Śrī-Chandrāditya*. No border of dots.

NARENDRĀDITYA

(A nameless king of the Seventh Cent. A.D.)

(GOLD)

Obv. King nimbate, facing with head to left; squatted, with left knee raised, on throne, which has *dha* on front; his right hand on knee; left hand raised. On each side a standing female attendant. Above king's left hand written vertically *yama*.

Rev. Lakshmī nimbate, standing facing left, holding long-stalked lotus in right hand; her left hand rests on hip; a lotus springs from ground behind her and a *haṁsa* facing left stands in front of her; no symbol. Legend on margin : *Śrī Narendrāditya* (*ḥ*). No border of dots.

ŚAŚAṄKA

(GOLD)

Śiva and Bull Type

Obv. Śiva, nimbate, reclining to left on a bull with his body half turned to right; the bull is couchant and facing left;

the left hand of the deity is uplifted holding an uncertain object, while the elbow of his right hand rests on the hump of the bull. Above the head of the bull is a disc representing probably the Moon (*Śaśāṅka*). On the right margin written vertically *Śaśa* and in exergue *Jayaḥ*.

Rev. Lakshmī, nimbate, seated cross-legged on lotus and facing front. She holds a lotus with stalk in her left hand which rests on her knee, while her right hand is outstretched but empty. Above, on either side of the deity, stands an elephant sprinkling water over her (*abhisheka* of Lakshmī). On the right : *Śrī Śaśāṅkaḥ*. No symbol or border of dots.

HARSHA

(GOLD)

Śiva and Pārvatī with Bull Type

Obv. Legend in five lines :

Parama (*bha*)
ṭṭāraka Mahārā
jādhirāja Parame
śvara Śrī Mahārā
(*ja Ha*) *rshadeva.*[1]

Rev. Crude representation of Śiva and Pārvatī, nimbate. The female deity sitting to the left with the recumbent bull Nandī close to their feet in the foreground. Both deities appear to be seated on a low platform which is concealed by the figure of the bull. While the male deity faces front, the female one has her face turned to the right. The former also appears to be seated cross-legged while the latter one has one leg placed on the thigh of the other leg which is dangling. The male deity has four arms while the other has only two. In two of his upper arms the deity holds a rosary and a trident. One of his lower arms rests on his thigh while the other one on the shoulder of his consort. A snake is seen over the plaited hair of Śiva tied in knot. The right hand of

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[1] *J. N. S. I.*, XXVII, pt. 1, p. 104. Cf. also *ibid.*, XXVIII, pt. 1, p. 68.

Pārvatī rests on the thigh of Śiva while the left hand is bent and slightly stretched towards the left. She wears coiffure, *lalāṭikā*, *ekāvalī* and *kuṇḍalas* as her personal ornaments. There is no decoration on the body of the bull which faces right. No legend, symbol, or border of dots.

DURLABHA

(GOLD)

Lakshmī Type

Obv. King standing and facing left, his right hand extended but slightly bent downwards. He wears a long gown, with conspicuously rolled-up edges, reaching his knee. In the left field : *jaya* (*ti*) and in the right : *Kidāra*.

Rev. Goddess Lakshmī (a crude figure) standing, facing front. In the right field : *Śri* (*ī*) *Durlabha* and in the left : *deva*.

AVANTIVARMAN

(SILVER)

Peacock Type

Var. A.

Obv. Head of the king to left; crescent over king's head; Date (2)70.

Rev. Peacock (*Paravāṇi*) standing with wings and tail outspread and facing front with head to left. Marginal legend : *Vijitāvaniravanipati Śrī Avantivarma* (*ā*) *divaṁ jayati*.

Var. B.

Obv. As above; crescent over the king's head with dot. Date (2)57.

Rev. Peacock as above, but with head to right. Marginal legend is the same as above.

PRATĀPAŚĪLA (PRABHĀKARAVARDHANA ?)

(SILVER)

Peacock Type

Obv. Head of king to left; crescent over king's head having a knob at each end; traces of date in the left field, preceded by the letter *sa* (*saṁvat ?*).

Rev. Peacock (*Paravāṇi*) standing with wings and tail outspread and facing front with head to left. Marginal legend : *Vijitāvaniravanipati Śrī Pratāpaśīla(ḥ) divaṁ jayati.*

ŚĪLĀDITYA (HARSHAVARDHANA)

(SILVER)

Peacock Type

Obv. Head of king to left; crescent over king's head having a knob at each end; traces of date in the left field preceded by the letter *sa* (*saṁvat*) Dates conjecturally read as 6, 10, 20, 25, 30, 31 and 33.

Rev. Peacock (*Paravāṇi*) standing with wings and tail outspread and facing front with head to left. Marginal legend : *Vijitāvaniravanipati Śrī Śīlāditya (ḥ) divaṁ jayati.*

HARSHA

(SILVER)[1]

Peacock Type

Obv. Head of king to left; crescent over king's head; date illegible.

Rev. Peacock (*Paravāṇi*) standing with wings and tail outspread and facing front with head to left. Marginal legend : *Vijitāvaniravanipati-Śrī-Harśa (shaḥ) divaṁ jayati.*

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[1] In the *Catalogue of the Coins of the Guptas, Maukharis, etc., in the Provincial Museum, Lucknow* by C. J. Brown, we find this particular coin mentioned as a copper coin of Harsha (p. 99). We have examined this coin and found it to be of silver and not of copper. We, therefore, consider it to be a genuine mistake on the part of the cataloguer.

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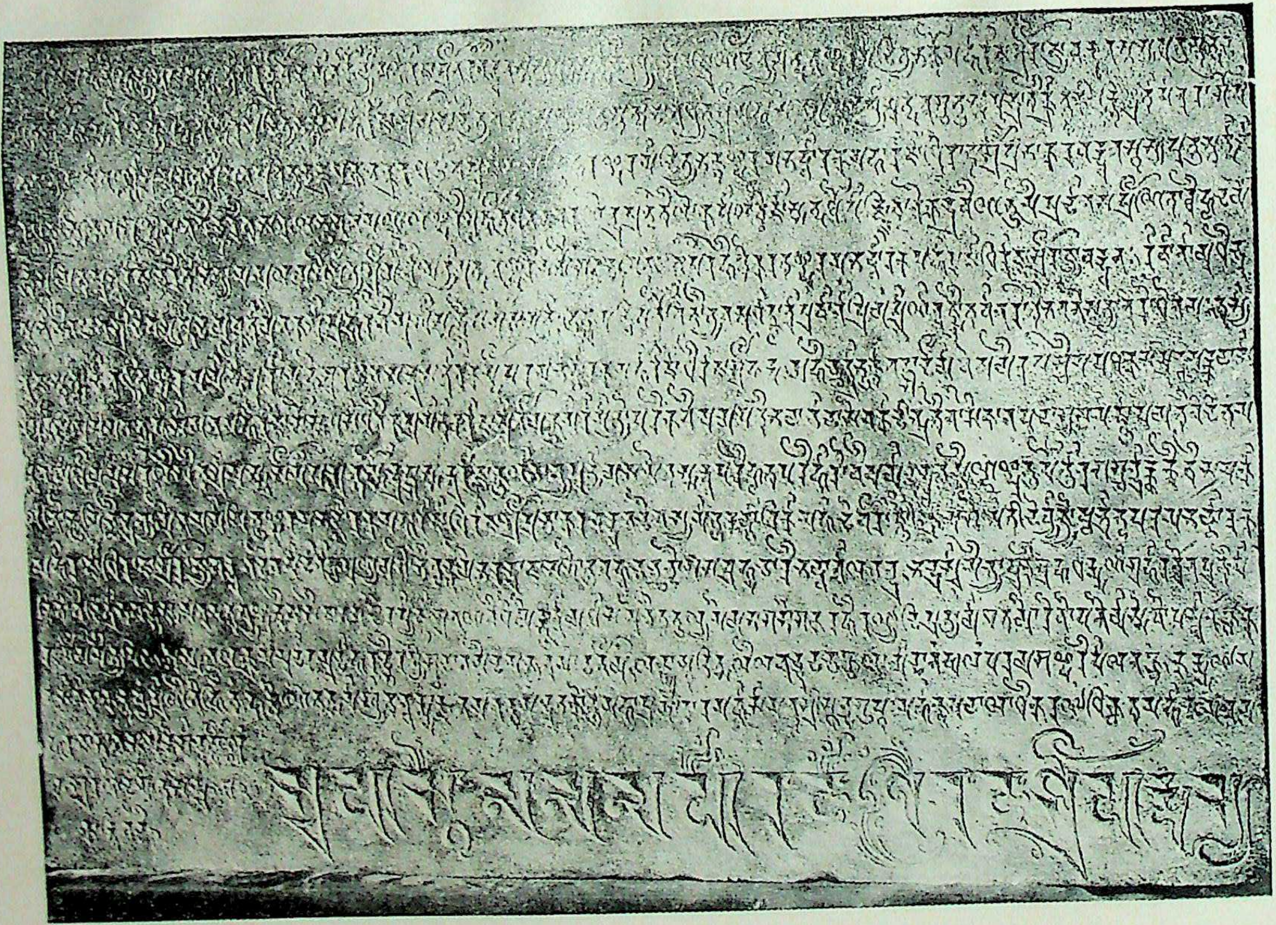
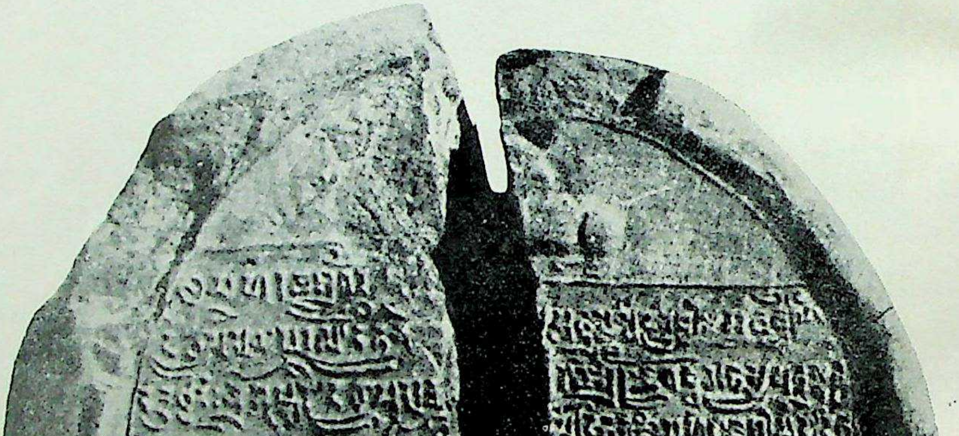
Plate I



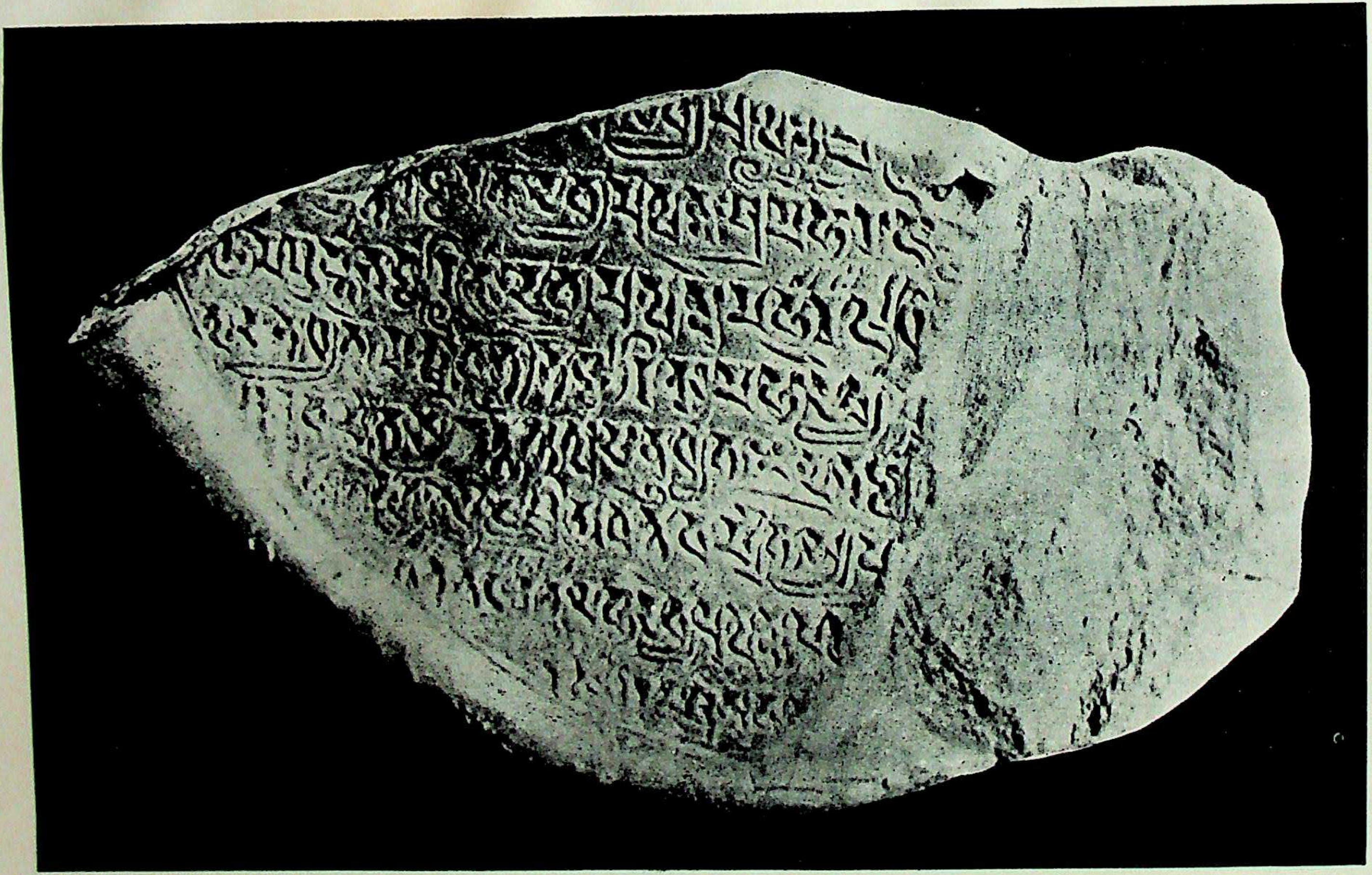
The Banskhera Copper Plate of Harsha

Plate II



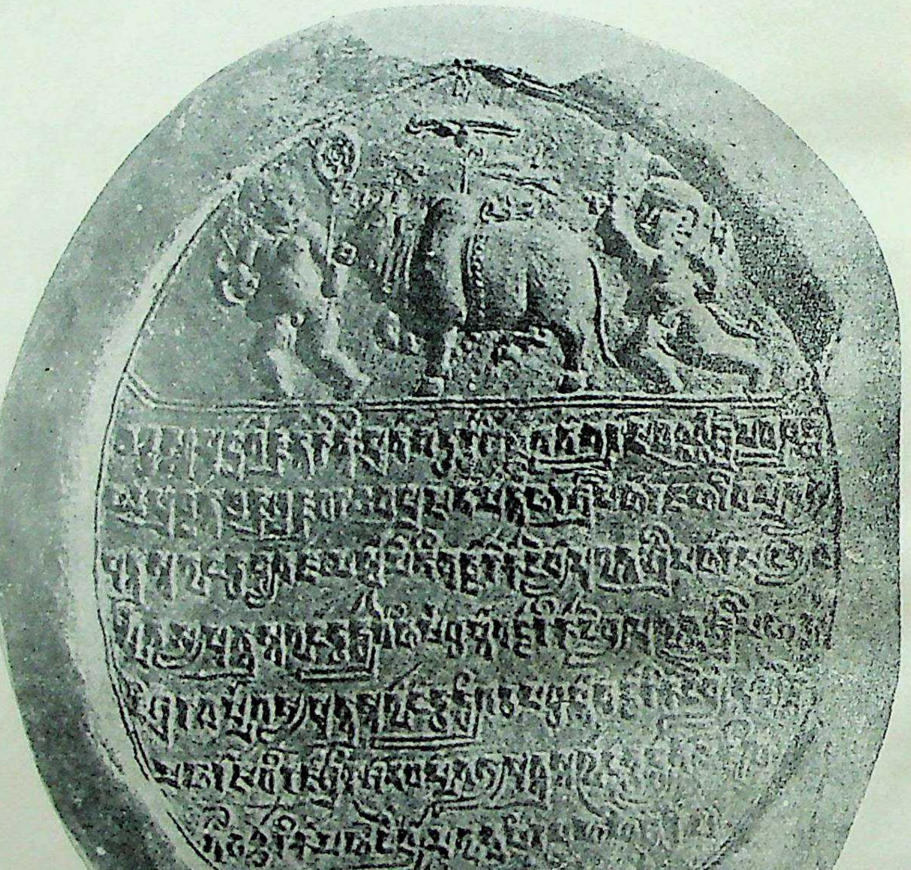
Nalanda Clay Seal of Harsha

Plate III



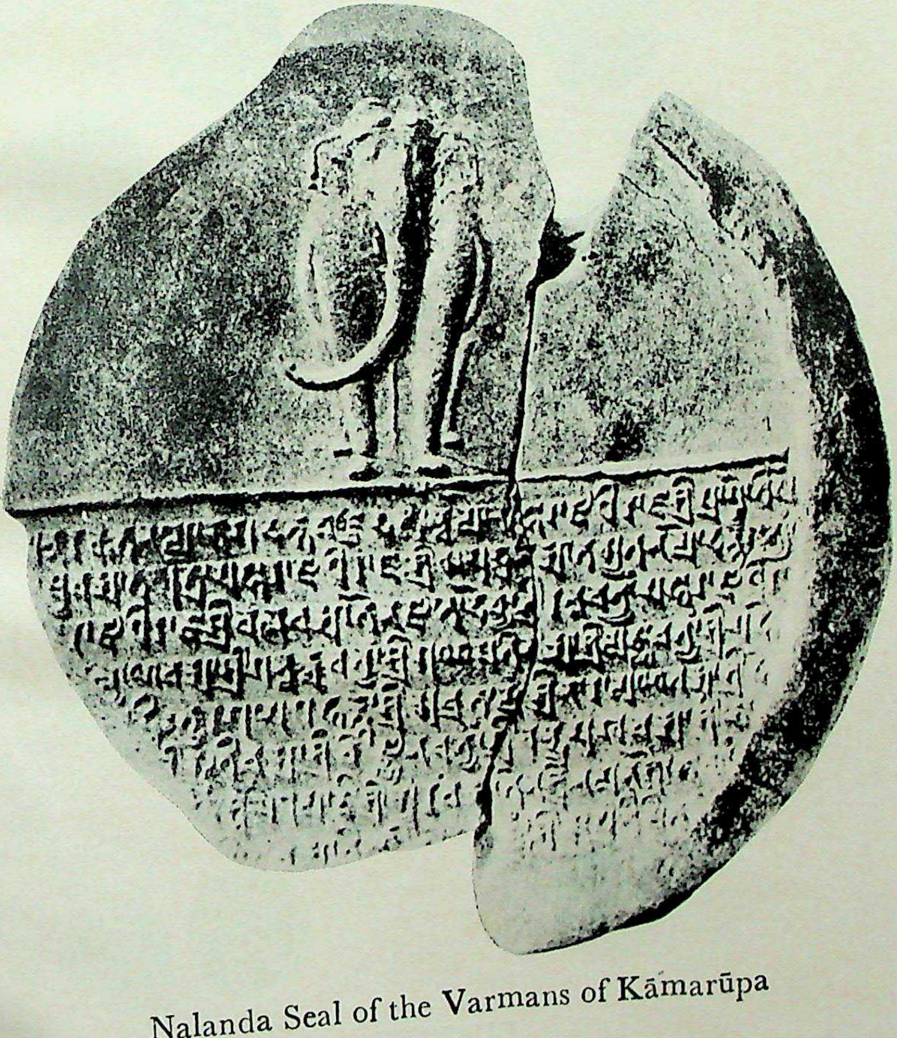
Nalanda Clay Seal of Su......

Plate IV



Asirgadh Seal of Sarvavarman

Plate V



Nalanda Seal of the Varmans of Kāmarūpa

Plate VI

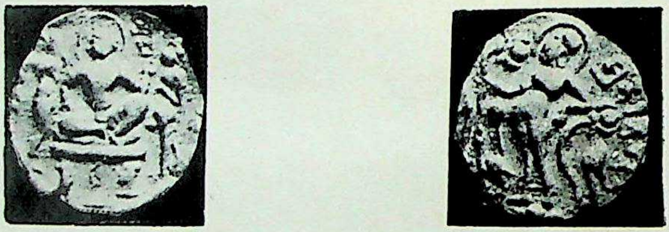
GOLD COINS

VISHṆUGUPTA CHANDRĀDITYA

Archer Type

Obv. *Rev.*

NARENDRĀDITYA

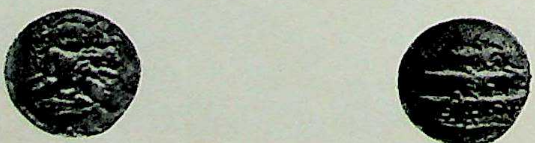


ŚAŚĀṄKA

Śiva And Bull Type

HARSHA

Śiva And Pārvatī With Bull Type



DUṚLABHA

Lakshmī Type

Plate VII

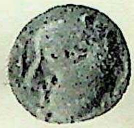
SILVER COINS

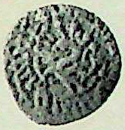
AVANTIVARMAN

Peacock Type

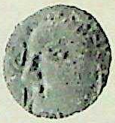
Var. A

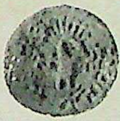
Obv. *Rev.*





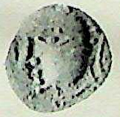
Var. B

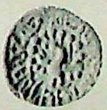




PRATĀPAŚĪLA (PRABHĀKARAVARDHANA ?)

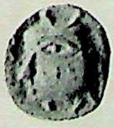
Peacock Type

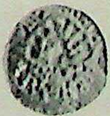




ŚĪLĀDITYA (HARSHAVARDHANA)

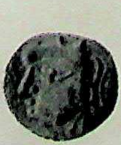
Peacock Type

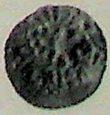




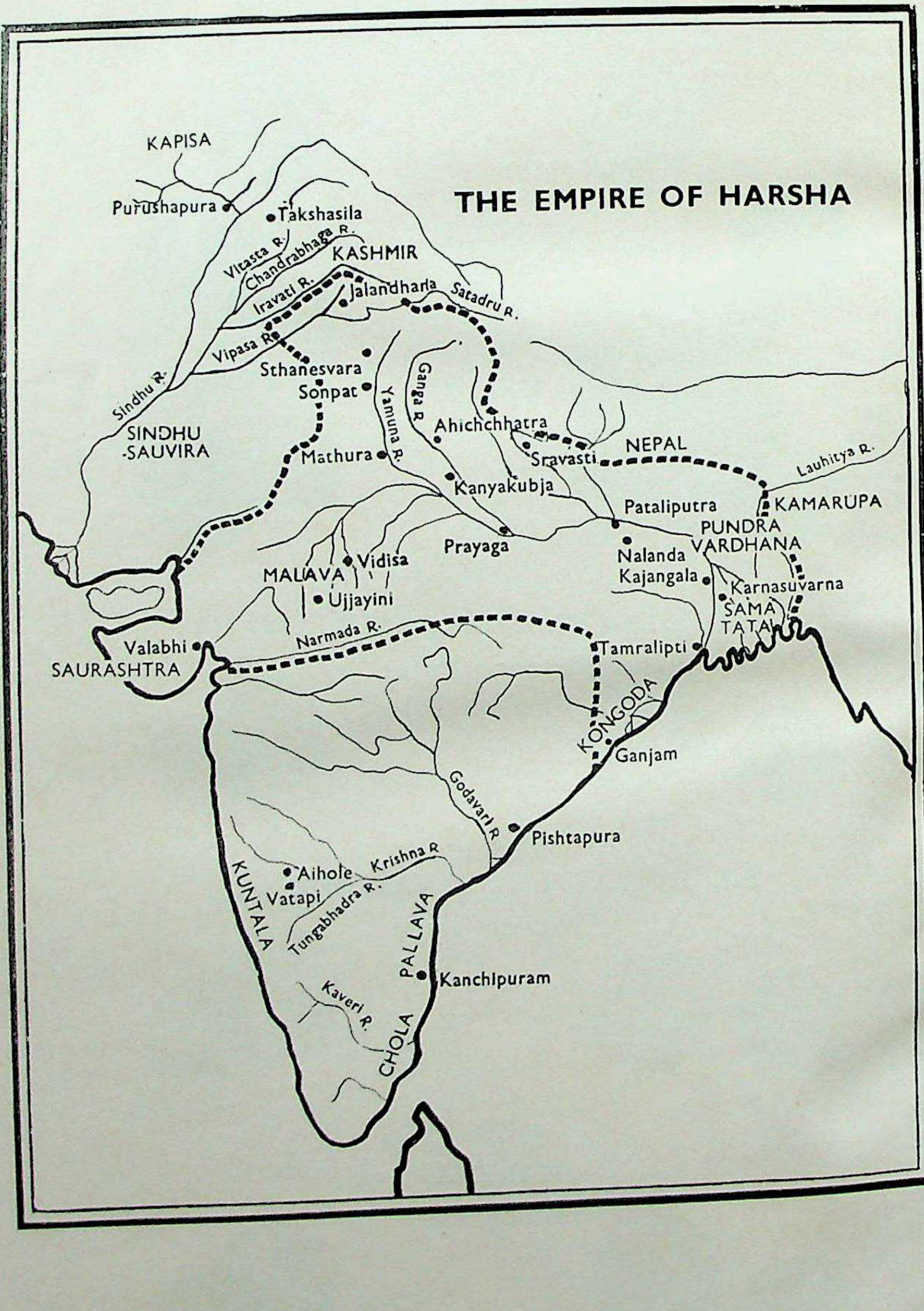
HARSHA

Peacock Type

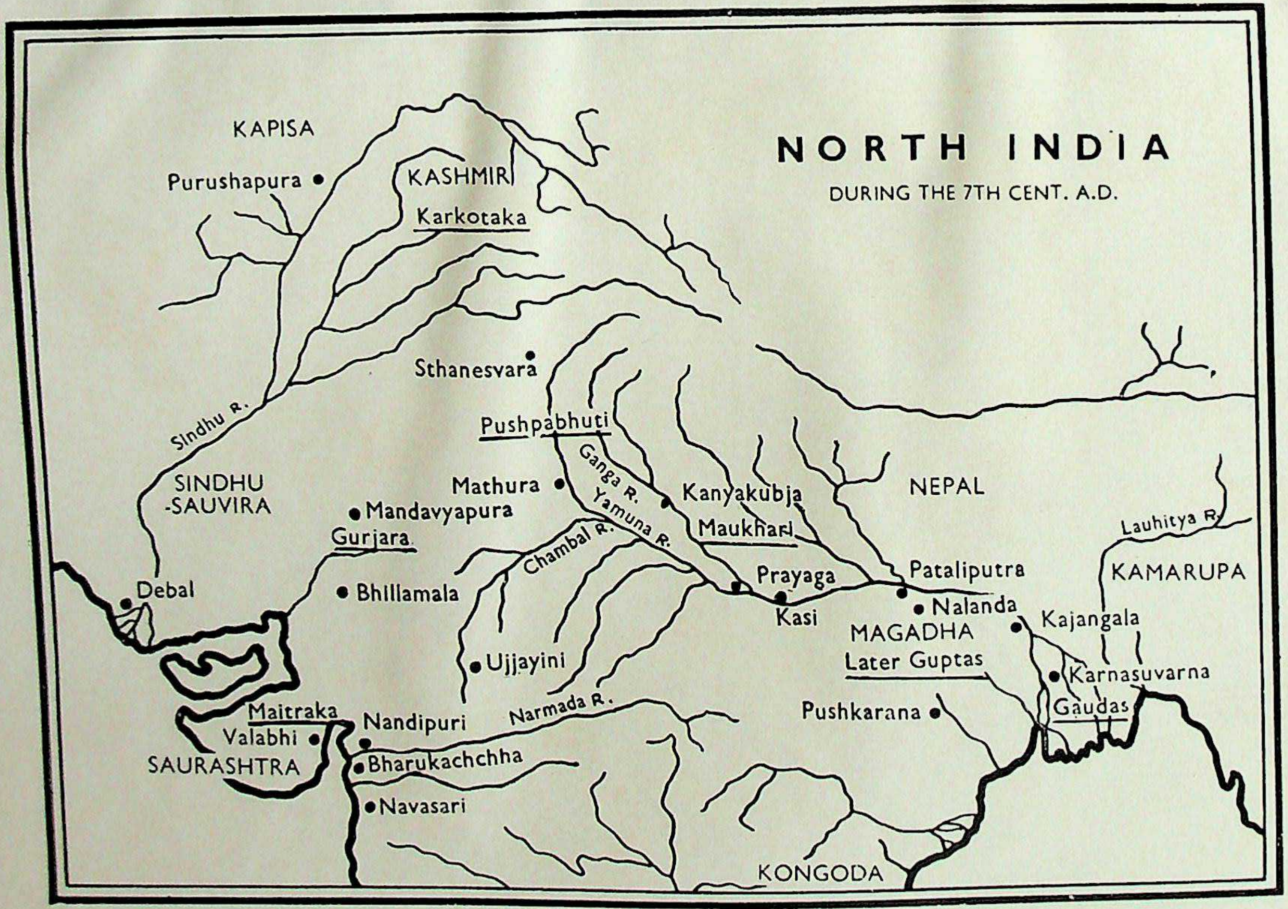




MAP II


THE EMPIRE OF HARSHA
KAPISA
Purushapura
Takshasila
Vitasta R.
Chandrabhaga R.
KASHMIR
Iravati R.
Jalandhara
Satadru R.
Vipasa R.
Sindhu R.
Sthanesvara
Sonpat
Ganga R.
Yamuna R.
SINDHU
-SAUVIRA
Ahichchhatra
NEPAL
Sravasti
Lauhitya R.
Mathura
Kanyakubja
Pataliputra
KAMARUPA
PUNDRA
VARDHANA
Prayaga
Nalanda
Kajangala
Vidisa
MALAVA
Ujjayini
Karnasuvarna
SAMA
TATA
Narmada R.
Valabhi
SAURASHTRA
Tamralipti
KONGODA
Ganjam
Godavari R.
Pishtapura
Krishna R.
Aihole
Vatapi
KUNTALA
Tungabhadra R.
PALLAVA
Kanchipuram
Kaveri R.
CHOLA

MAP I


NORTH INDIA
DURING THE 7TH CENT. A.D.
KAPISA
Purushapura
KASHMIR
Karkotaka
Sthanesvara
Sindhu R.
SINDHU -SAUVIRA
Pushpabhuti
Ganga R.
Yamuna R.
Mathura
Mandavyapura
Gurjara
Kanyakubja
Maukhari
NEPAL
Lauhitya R.
KAMARUPA
Chambal R.
Prayaga
Kasi
Pataliputra
Nalanda
Kajangala
MAGADHA
Later Guptas
Karnasuvarna
Gaudas
Debal
Bhillamala
Ujjayini
Maitraka
Valabhi
SAURASHTRA
Nandipuri
Narmada R.
Bharukachchha
Navasari
Pushkarana
KONGODA

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Dr. B.N. SRIVASTAVA

HARSHA

AND

HIS TIMES